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FAIR WORDS and FAIR WOMAN

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MARGARET

FAIR WORDS ABOUT FAIR WOMAN.

GATHERED FROM THE POETS

BY

O. B. BUNCE.

"A Gorgious Gallery of Gallant Inventions, garnished and decked with divers dayntie devices, right delicate and delightfull, to recreate eche modest minde withall."

TITLE OF AN OLD ENGLISH MISCELLANY.

NEW YORK:

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY,

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1883.

From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academes
That show, contain, and nourish all the world.

SHAKESPEARE.

A woman of sense and manners is the finest and most delicate part of God's creation; the glory of her Maker, and the great instance of His singular regard to man; His darling creature to whom He gave the best gift either God could bestow or man receive.

DEFOE.

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes O;
Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,
An' then she made the lasses O.

BURNS.

Oh! if the loving, closed heart of a good woman should open before a man, how much controlled tenderness, how many veiled sacrifices and dumb virtues would he see reposing therein!

RICHTER.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

PRELUDE 11

FIRST EVENING—

Adam's Description of Eve. (From "Paradise Lost.")..JOHN MILTON..... 17
Woman's Cause the Man's. (From "The Princess.")..ALFRED TENNYSON..... 19
The Gift to Woman.....From the Greek of ANACREON. 21
Lovely Woman. (From "Venice Preserved.").....THOMAS OTWAY 21
Womanhood. (From "Angel in the House.").....COVENTRY PATMORE.... 22
The Power of Woman.....From the German of SCHILLER. 22
Woman.....T. BUCHANAN READ 23
Woman.....FITZ-GREENE HALLECK. 24
The Rose of the World. (From "Angel in the House.") COVENTRY PATMORE.... 25
What were Man without Woman? (From "Pleasures of Hope.") .....THOMAS CAMPBELL..... 27
A Mind within.....MARK AKENSIDE..... 28
Superiority of the Affections. (From "The Spanish Student.").....H. W. LONGFELLOW.... 29
Right Pursuits of Women. (From "The Seasons.")....JAMES THOMSON..... 30
Qualities of Woman. (From "Characters of Women.").ALEXANDER POPE 31
Animation in Woman. (From "Damætas.").....LORD BYRON 32
Maidenhood.....H. W. LONGFELLOW.... 33
Irené .....JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL. 35
Votive Wreaths. (From "Epipsychidion.").....PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY. 38

SECOND EVENING—

The Bride. (From "Epithalamion.") .....EDMUND SPENSER 45
Sonnet.....SIR PHILIP SIDNEY 49
A Praise of his Lady.....JOHN HEYWOOD 49
Samela .....ROBERT GREENE 51
Menaphon's Eclogue .....ROBERT GREENE 52
Rosalynd.....THOMAS LODGE..... 54

PAGE

Who is Sylvia? (From "Two Gentlemen of Verona.").....WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE..... 55
Charis:.....BEN JONSON.
I. Triumph of Charis..... 56
II. Discourse with Cupid..... 57
Pictures of the Body and of the Mind:.....BEN JONSON.
I. The Picture of the Body..... 59
II. The Picture of the Mind..... 60
A Vision of Beauty. (From "The New Inn.")...BEN JONSON..... 63
On Lucy, Countess of Bedford.....BEN JONSON..... 64
The Sleeping Beauty. (From "Woman Pleased.") BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.... 64
Song. (From "The False One.").....BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.... 65
The Song of Tavy.....WILLIAM BROWNE..... 65
To his Mistress.....SIR HENRY WOTTON..... 66
Ask me no more where Jove bestows.....THOMAS CAREW..... 67
Julia.....ROBERT HERRICK..... 68
Description of Castara.....WILLIAM HABINGTON..... 69
The Bride. (From "A Ballad of a Wedding.")..SIR JOHN SUCKLING..... 70
Song.....RICHARD LOVELACE..... 72
Upon Combing the Hair.....LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY. 72
My All. (From "A Pastoral Courtship.").....THOMAS RANDOLPH..... 73
Woman.....THOMAS RANDOLPH..... 74
To a Lady admiring Herself in a Looking-Glass..THOMAS RANDOLPH..... 74
There is a Garden in her Face.....RICHARD ALISON..... 75
On a Girdle.....EDMUND WALLER..... 76
To Amoret.....EDMUND WALLER..... 77

THIRD EVENING—

(*The Selections for this Evening are all by* ALFRED TENNYSON.)

Lilian..... 81
Isabel..... 82
Madeline..... 84
Adeline..... 85
Margaret..... 88
Eleänore..... 90
The Miller's Daughter. (From "The Miller's Daughter.")..... 95
The Gardener's Daughter. (From "The Gardener's Daughter.")..... 96
Maud. (From "Maud.")..... 102
Rosalind..... 106
A Dream of Fair Women..... 108

FOURTH EVENING— PAGE

The Birth of Portraiture. (From "Evenings in Greece.").THOMAS MOORE 121
Lesbia hath a Beaming Eye.....THOMAS MOORE 122
Black and Blue Eyes .....THOMAS MOORE 124
To Nea .....THOMAS MOORE 125
Oh, once I loved a Bonnie Lass.....ROBERT BURNS..... 127
My Nannie, O .....ROBERT BURNS..... 128
Jessie .....ROBERT BURNS..... 130
Bonnie Lesley .....ROBERT BURNS..... 130
The Lass o' Ballochmyle.....ROBERT BURNS..... 131
Highland Mary .....ROBERT BURNS..... 133
Annie Laurie .....DOUGLAS OF FINGLAND.. 134
My Blythe an' Bonnie Lassie.....JAMES HOGG..... 135
When Maggy gangs away.....JAMES HOGG..... 136
The Lass of Gleneslan-Mill.....ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.... 137
There lives a Young Lassie .....JOHN IMLAH..... 138
The Nameless Lassie.....JAMES BALLANTYNE 139
Mary Dhu .....DAVID MACBETH MOIR.. 140
Jessie, the Flower o' Dumblane.....ROBERT TANNAHILL.... 141
The Banks of the Lee .....THOMAS OSBORNE DAVIS. 142
The Pretty Girl of Loch Dan .....SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.. 143
Kitty Neil .....JOHN FRANCIS WALLER. 146
Molly Carew.....SAMUEL LOVER..... 147
Lovely Mary Donnelly.....WILLIAM ALLINGHAM... 150
Oh! were my Love .....WILLIAM ALLINGHAM... 151

FIFTH EVENING—

The Portrait .....From the Greek of ANACREON..... 155
Helen's Epithalamion.....From the Greek of THEOCRITUS..... 156
From the Greek Anthology:
Meleager 157
Philodemus 159
Asclepiades..... 160
Paul the Silentiary 160
Sulpicia.....From the Latin of TIBULLUS 160
Beatrice.....From the Italian of DANTE..... 162
To Laura's Eyes.....From the Italian of PETRARCH..... 164
Leonora .....From the Italian of TASSO..... 167
To Vittoria Colonna.....From the Italian of MICHAEL ANGELO. 168
The Might of One Fair Face.....From the Italian of MICHAEL ANGELO. 168

PAGE

Myrrha's Eyes.....From the Italian of ANGELO POLIZIANO..... 169
Tuscan Love-Songs 170
My wand'ring Thoughts awake to
Love anew.....From the Romanic of LE CHÂTELAIN DE COUCY. 171
She's fairer than my Dreams.....From the Romanic of ELIAS CAIREL 173
I must be worthy of her Love....From the Romanic of RAIMOND DE MIRAVALS... 174
Virelay .....From the French of JEAN FROISSART..... 175
The Fairest Thing in Mortal Eyes.From the French of CHARLES, DUKE OF ORLEANS..... 176
To Mary Stuart.....From the French of PIERRE DE RONSARD..... 178
How fair she is!.....From the French of BÉRANGER..... 179
A Love-Song.....From the French of LAMARTINE..... 180
A Serenade .....From the French of P. DUPONT..... 184
All—all is Love.....From the French of VICTOR HUGO..... 185
My Mistress.....From the French of AUGUSTE BRIZEUX..... 186
The Praise of Woman .....From the German of SCHILLER..... 187
The Song of Songs .....From the German of HEINE..... 189
Love's Salutation.....From the German of HEINE..... 191
Women.....From the Spanish of CRISTOVAL DE CASTILLEJO. 192
Sylvia's Smile .....From the Spanish of FRANCISCO DE BORJA Y ESQUILACHE 193
Praise of Little Women.....From the Spanish of JUAN RUIZ DE HITA..... 194
How fair the Maiden I.....From the Portuguese of GIL VICENTE..... 196
Amanda .....From the Swedish of ERIC JOHAN STAGNELIUS. 197

SIXTH EVENING—

Vanessa. (From "Cadenus and Vanessa.") .....JONATHAN SWIFT..... 201
To Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.....ALEXANDER POPE 205
A Comparison.....WILLIAM COWPER..... 206
A Portrait. (From "Tales of the Hall.").....GEORGE CRABBE..... 206
To a Highland Girl .....WILLIAM WORDSWORTH..... 207
Genevieve .....SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE. 209
Song to Fanny.....JAMES SMITH..... 209
Caroline.....THOMAS CAMPBELL..... 210
The Girl of Cadiz.....LORD BYRON..... 212
She walks in Beauty .....LORD BYRON..... 214
To Mary, on receiving her Picture .....LORD BYRON 214
An Eve in her Eden. (From "The Sensitive-Plant.") PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY 216
Ruth.....THOMAS HOOD..... 217
Fair Ines.....THOMAS HOOD..... 218

PAGE

A Violet in her Hair.....CHARLES SWAIN..... 220
A Health.....EDWARD COATE PINKNEY..... 221
O fairest of the Rural Maids.....WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.... 222
I love my Love.....CHARLES MACKAY..... 223
Annabel Lee.....EDGAR ALLAN POE..... 224
L'Inconnu.....OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.... 225
Love-Lily.....DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.... 226
Evelyn Hope.....ROBERT BROWNING..... 227
Love in the Valley.....GEORGE MEREDITH..... 229
My Day and Night.....JOHN PAYNE..... 232
Janette's Hair.....CHARLES GRAHAM HALPINE... 233
Florence Nightingale.....RICHARD HENRY STODDARD... 234
At her Window.....FREDERICK LOCKER..... 235
A Pastoral.....THEOPHILE MARZIALS..... 236
The Bright Little Girl.....WILLIAM ALLINGHAM..... 237
Violet Eyes.....EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN. 238
The Sunshine of thine Eyes.....GEORGE P. LATHROP..... 239
The Blush.....CHARLES DE KAY..... 240

SEVENTH EVENING—

The Wife.....JAMES SHIRLEY..... 243
Happiness of Married Life.....THOMAS MIDDLETON..... 244
On the Countess of Abingdon.....JOHN DRYDEN..... 244
The Rural Maid. (From "Rural Sports.").....JOHN GAY..... 245
To Mrs. Unwin.....WILLIAM COWPER..... 246
My Wife's a Winsome Wee Thing.....ROBERT BURNS..... 246
A Portrait.....WILLIAM WORDSWORTH..... 247
If Thou wert by my Side.....REGINALD HEBER..... 248
Flower of my Cold and Darkened Year.....THOMAS KIBBLE HERVEY..... 250
Character of a Wife. (From "Philip Van Artevelde.").....SIR HENRY TAYLOR..... 252
The Poet's Song to his Wife.....BARRY CORNWALL..... 253
An Angel in the House.....LEIGH HUNT..... 254
Wifie, come Hame.....JAMES BALLANTYNE..... 254
The Poet's Bridal-day Song.....ALLAN CUNNINGHAM..... 255
Maiden Life. (From "Snow-Bound.").....JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER. 257
Early Impressions. (From "The Princess.").....ALFRED TENNYSON..... 258
Look through mine Eyes with thine. (From "The Miller's Daughter.").....ALFRED TENNYSON..... 259
My Love.....GERALD MASSEY..... 260

PAGE

O, lay thy Hand in mine, Dear ..... GERALD MASSEY 261
Woman's Voice ..... EDWIN ARNOLD 262
My Love ..... JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL 263
Hermioné ..... ROBERT BUCHANAN 265
Laura, my Darling ..... EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN. 268
The Bonny Brown Hand ..... PAUL H. HAYNE 269

EIGHTH EVENING—

The Heroines of Shakespeare :
Juliet 273
Portia 274
Portia's Portrait 274
Miranda 275
Imogen, sleeping 276
Rosalind 276
Perdita 277
Una. (From "The Faerie Queen.") ..... EDMUND SPENSER 278
Una and the Red-Cross Knight 278
Una and the Lion 279
Una as a Bride 281
Hero. (From "Hero and Leander.") ..... CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE 282
Earine. (From "The Sad Shepherd.") ..... BEN JONSON 283
Euphrasia. (From "Philaster.") ..... BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER 284
Ellen. (From "The Lady of the Lake.") ..... SIR WALTER SCOTT 286
Gertrude. (From "Gertrude of Wyoming.") ..... THOMAS CAMPBELL 289
Nourmahal. (From "The Light of the Harem.") .. THOMAS MOORE 293
Donna Julia. (From "Don Juan.") ..... LORD BYRON 294
Leila. (From "The Giaour.") ..... LORD BYRON 295
Zuleika. (From "The Bride of Abydos.") ..... LORD BYRON 297
Haidée. (From "Don Juan.") ..... LORD BYRON 298
Madeline. (From "The Eve of St. Agnes.") ..... JOHN KEATS 299
Evangeline. (From "Evangeline.") ..... H. W. LONGFELLOW 302
Enid and Elaine ..... ALFRED TENNYSON 305
Enid 305
Elaine 307

L'ENVOI 309

INDEX TO AUTHORS 313

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FAIR WORDS ABOUT FAIR WOMAN.

PRELUDE.

IT was at a small social gathering, and some one quoted a jeering comment on women.

"Come," said Mr. Bluff—commonly known as Bachelor Bluff—"we'll have no unkind things said of women. At heart we all love and admire them; why, then, do we permit ourselves to repeat the satirical and unhandsome things that thoughtless or bad-tempered wits may utter?"

"Does not the abundance of these unhandsome sayings," asked Sylvia, "show that you men really do not care for women?"

"Emphatically not," replied Mr. Bluff. "Unkind things about women are commonly the product of momentary vexation or pure thoughtlessness. See how full literature is of man's admiration of women!"

"*Is* it so full?" asked Sylvia. "I remember many bitter things about women."

"You will find, my dear young lady, that ill-natured comments in literature about women are merely as specks upon fruit. The picture of woman as painted by our poets, for instance, fairly transcends in splendor everything else in the world of letters."

"I have read some love-poems," said the matter-of-fact Miranda, "that seemed to me very foolish."

"No doubt," said Mr. Bluff. "Enthusiasm always seems a little foolish to cool lookers-on; but put yourself in the poetic mood: let your warm sympathies, and not cold criticism, sit in judgment, and you will find in many love-poems a glow and splendor that are very captivating."

"That is all very well for young people."

"Ah, madam, it is an excellent thing to keep young as long as possible. As old a file as I am, I can sometimes go back to the poetic fancies of youth; and I am convinced that the faculty of doing so is the very best art of life."

"Let us read some love-poems," exclaimed Sylvia.

"Let us make a search for poems generally about women," responded Herbert.

"Why not have a sort of reading club?" said Mr. Bluff. "Let us meet weekly, and each of us bring the best he can find about woman—all that exalts her, that glorifies her, that sets forth her charms, her loveliness, her virtues—in brief, all her perfections."

"That would be delightful," exclaimed Sylvia; "but you and Herbert, and others that you may induce to join you, must select the poems, and bring them to us, the women. You must lay at our feet a weekly garland, a poetic posy; and we shall watch to see how well you do it."

"No knight," gallantly responded Herbert, "ever received a commission from his lady-love that he executed with more pleasure and faithfulness than we shall do what you command."

"As Herbert," said Mr. Bluff, who, by virtue of his years, constituted himself at once president of the new club, "has taste and appreciation, as well as abundant energy, let it be his duty to make sure that each occasion is well provided with material, and to arrange it suitably. We shall aid him all we can, but there must be

one main dependence; and as he has a pleasant voice, and knows how to read with good accent and good discretion, he must be the Reader."

"Your plan," said Herbert, "puts nearly all the labor on my shoulders; but I am honored by the commission, nevertheless."

"If I were a younger man, I should compete with you for it. It shall be your privilege, when you think proper, to accompany the selections with explanations, and we will listen submissively. If you venture upon criticism, we will be patient; and, if you consent to read without comment, we shall be grateful."

"Be assured," replied Herbert, "that I shall let the poets for the most part speak for themselves, without intruding my notions upon you. But I am not wholly unacquainted with the ground, and can say in advance that we shall find woman appearing in poetry in a manner that admits of several classifications. Sometimes there are verses addressed simply to the sex—splendid generalizations of the virtues of women; then we shall meet with poems of admiration, describing the qualities of particular women, who sometimes, no doubt, had real existence, and sometimes were only poetic ideals; then there are love-poems, full of amorous passion; then, poems addressed to women of historic or social fame; and, lastly, there are idealizations of women as heroines of romantic story."

"Our selections," said Mr. Bluff, "should be drawn from all these classes, so as to include every form in which admiration of women has been expressed or implied."

"That is clearly the true principle," continued Herbert; "and I shall take the liberty of grouping or contrasting the various classes as may seem best, having in view both unity and variety."

"We trust everything to you," said Sylvia.

Thereupon the time and place for the first evening were agreed upon; and soon after the company separated.

IN EXALTATION OF WOMAN

· FIRST · EVENING ·

FIRST EVENING.

Wherein the Mother of the Race is notably honored and Woman's Place defined; the Qualities of the Sex are thereafter exalted; and Choice Pictures of Maidenhood and noble Womanhood presented.

ADAM'S DESCRIPTION OF EVE.

FROM "PARADISE LOST," BY JOHN MILTON.

ON she came,
Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice; nor uninformed
Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:
Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.
I, overjoyed, could not forbear aloud.
"This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfilled
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself
Before me: woman is her name; of man
Extracted: for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul."

She heard me thus; and though divinely brought,
Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,
Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,
That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, nor obtrusive, but, retired,
The more desirable: or, to say all
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turned:
I followed her; she what was honor knew,
And with obsequious majesty approved
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
I led her blushing like the morn: all Heaven,
And happy constellations, on that hour
Shed their selectest influence; the Earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odors from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
On his hill-top, to light the bridal lamp.

* * * * * * *

Yet, when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best:
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanced, and like Folly shows;
Authority and Reason on her wait,

As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind, and Nobleness, their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic placed.

* * * * * * *

Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
Those thousand decencies, that daily flow
From all her words and actions mixed with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned
Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair
More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.
Yet these subject not: I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variously representing: yet, still free,
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.

WOMAN'S CAUSE THE MAN'S.

FROM "THE PRINCESS," BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

THE woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink
Together, dwarfed or godlike, bond or free:
For she that out of Lethe scales with man
The shining steps of Nature, shares with man
His nights, his days, moves with him to one goal,
Stays all the fair young planet in her hands—
If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
How shall men grow? but work no more alone!

Our place is much: as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in aiding her—
Will clear away the parasitic forms
That seem to keep her up but drag her down—
Will leave her space to burgeon out of all
Within her—let her make herself her own
To give or keep, to live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood.
For woman is not undeveloped man,
But diverse: could we make her as the man,
Sweet love were slain: his dearest bond is this,
Not like to like, but like in difference.
Yet in the long years liker must they grow;
The man be more of woman, she of man;
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words.
And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,
Sit side by side, full-summed in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other ev'n as those who love.
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men:
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm:
Then springs the crowning race of humankind.
May these things be!

THE GIFT TO WOMAN.

FROM THE GREEK OF ANACREON, BY THOMAS MOORE.

TO all that breathe the airs of heaven,
Some boon of strength has Nature given.
When the majestic bull was born,
She fenced his brow with wreathèd horn;
She armed the courser's foot of air,
And winged with speed the panting hare;
She gave the lion fangs of terror,
And, on the ocean's crystal mirror,
Taught the unnumbered scaly throng
To trace their liquid path along;
While for the umbrage of the grove,
She plumed the warbling world of love.
To man she gave the flame refined,
The spark of heaven—a thinking mind!
And had she no surpassing treasure
For thee, O woman! child of pleasure?
She gave thee beauty—shaft of eyes,
That every shaft of war outflies!
She gave thee beauty—blush of fire,
That bids the flames of war retire!
Woman! be fair, we must adore thee!
Smile, and a world is weak before thee!

LOVELY WOMAN.

FROM "VENICE PRESERVED," BY THOMAS OTWAY.

O WOMAN! lovely woman! Nature made thee
To temper man; we had been brutes without you!
Angels are painted fair, to look like you:

There's in you all that we believe of heaven;
Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love.

WOMANHOOD.

FROM "ANGEL IN THE HOUSE," BY COVENTRY PATMORE.

BE man's hard virtues highly wrought,
But let my gentle Mistress be,
In every look, word, deed, and thought,
Nothing but sweet and womanly!
Her virtues please my virtuous mood,
But what at all times I admire
Is, not that she is wise or good,
But just the thing which I desire.
With versatility to bring
Her mental tone to any strain,
If oft'nest she is anything,
Be it thoughtless, talkative, and vain,
That seems in her supremest grace,
Which, virtue or not, apprises me
That my familiar arms embrace
Unfathomable mystery.

THE POWER OF WOMAN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER.

MIGHTY art thou, because of the peaceful charms of thy presence;
That which the silent does not, never the boastful can do.
Vigor in man I expect, the law in its honors maintaining,
But, through the graces alone, woman e'er rules or should rule.

Many, indeed, have ruled through the might of the spirit and action,
But, then, thou noblest of crowns, they were deficient in thee.
No real queen exists but the womanly beauty of woman;
Where it appears, it must rule; ruling because it appears!

WOMAN.

BY T. BUCHANAN READ.

AN angel, wandering out of heaven,
And all too bright for Eden even,
Once through the path of paradise
Made luminous the auroral air;
And, walking in His awful guise,
Met the Eternal Father there;
Who, when He saw the truant sprite,
Smiled love through all those bowers of light.
While deep within her trancèd spell,
Our Eden sire lay slumbering near,
God saw, and said, "It is not well
For man alone to linger here."
Then took that angel by the hand,
And with a kiss its brow He pressed,
And whispering all His mild command,
He laid it on the sleeper's breast;
With earth enough to make it human,
He chained its wings, and called it WOMAN.
And if perchance some stains of rust
Upon her pinions yet remain,
'Tis but the mark of God's own dust,
The earth-mold of that Eden chain!

WOMAN.

BY FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

(*Written in the album of an unknown lady.*)

LADY, although we have not met,
And may not meet, beneath the sky;
And whether thine are eyes of jet,
Gray, or dark blue, or violet,
Or hazel—Heaven knows, not I;

Whether around thy cheek of rose
A maiden's glowing locks are curled,
And to some thousand kneeling beaux
Thy frown is cold as winter snows,
Thy smile is worth a world;

Or whether, past youth's joyous strife,
The calm of thought is on thy brow,
And thou art in thy noon of life,
Loving and loved, a happy wife,
And happier mother now—

I know not: but, whate'er thou art,
Whoe'er thou art, were mine the spell,
To call Fate's joys or blunt his dart,
There should not be one hand or heart
But served or wished thee well.

For thou art woman—with that word
Life's dearest hopes and memories come,
Truth, Beauty, Love—in her adored,
And earth's lost Paradise restored
In the green bower of home.

What is man's love? His vows are broke,
Even while his parting kiss is warm;
But woman's love all change will mock,
And, like the ivy round the oak,
Cling closest in the storm.

And well the Poet at her shrine
May bend, and worship while he woos;
To him she is a thing divine,
The inspiration of his line,
His Sweetheart and his Muse.

If to his song the echo rings
Of Fame—'tis woman's voice he hears;
If ever from his lyre's proud strings
Flow sounds like rush of angel-wings,
'Tis that she listens while he sings,
With blended smiles and tears:

Smiles—tears—whose blessed and blessing power,
Like sun and dew o'er summer's tree,
Alone keeps green through Time's long hour,
That frailer thing than leaf or flower,
A poet's immortality.

THE ROSE OF THE WORLD.

FROM "ANGEL IN THE HOUSE," BY COVENTRY PATMORE.

I.

LO! when the Lord made North and South,
And sun and moon ordainèd, He,
Forth bringing each by word of mouth
In order of its dignity,

Did man from the crude clay express
  By sequence, and, all else decreed,
He formed the woman: nor might less
  Than Sabbath such a work succeed.

2.

And still with favor singled out,
  Marred less than man by mortal Fall,
Her disposition is devout,
  Her countenance angelical;
No faithless thought her instinct shrouds,
  But fancy checkers settled sense,
Like alternations of the clouds
  On noonday's azure permanence;
Pure courtesy, composure, ease,
  Declare affections nobly fixed,
And impulse sprung from due degrees
  Of sense and spirit sweetly mixed;
Her modesty, her chiefest grace,
  The cestus clasping Venus' side,
Is potent to deject the face
  Of him who would offend its pride;
Wrong dares not in her presence speak,
  Nor spotted thought its taint disclose,
Under the protest of a cheek
  Outstripping Nature's boast the rose.
In mind and manners how discreet!
  How artless in her very art;
How candid in discourse; how sweet
  The concord of her lips and heart;
How (not to call true instinct's bent
  And woman's very nature, harm),

How amiable and innocent
  Her pleasure in her power to charm;
How humbly careful to attract,
  Though crowned with all the soul desires,
Connubial aptitude exact,
  Diversity that never tires.

WHAT WERE MAN WITHOUT WOMAN?

FROM "PLEASURES OF HOPE," BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

IN joyous youth, what soul hath never known
  Thought, feeling, taste, harmonious to its own?
Who hath not paused while Beauty's pensive eye
Asked from his heart the homage of a sigh?
Who hath not owned, with rapture-smitten frame,
The power of grace, the magic of a name?
  There be, perhaps, who barren hearts avow,
Cold as the rocks on Torneo's hoary brow;
There be, whose loveless wisdom never failed,
In self-adoring pride securely mailed:
But, triumph not, ye peace-enamored few!
Fire, Nature, Genius, never dwelt with you!
For you no fancy consecrates the scene
Where rapture uttered vows, and wept between;
'Tis yours, unmoved, to sever and to meet;
No pledge is sacred, and no home is sweet!
  Who that would ask a heart to dullness wed,
The waveless calm, the slumber of the dead?
No; the wild bliss of Nature needs alloy,
And fear and sorrow fan the fire of joy!
And say, without our hopes, without our fears,
Without the home that plighted love endears,

Without the smile from partial beauty won,
Oh! what were man?—a world without a sun.
Till Hymen brought his love-delighted hour,
There dwelt no joy in Eden's rosy bower!
In vain the viewless seraph lingering there,
At starry midnight charmed the silent air;
In vain the wild-bird carolled on the steep,
To hail the sun, slow wheeling from the deep;
In vain, to soothe the solitary shade,
Aërial notes in mingling measure played;
The summer wind that shook the spangled tree,
The whispering wave, the murmur of the bee;
Still slowly passed the melancholy day,
And still the stranger wist not where to stray.
The world was sad!—the garden was a wild!
And man, the hermit, sighed—till woman smiled!

A MIND WITHIN.

BY MARK AKENSIDE.

THE shape alone let others prize,
The features of the fair;
I look for spirit in her eyes,
And meaning in her air.

A damask cheek, an ivory arm,
Shall ne'er my wishes win:
Give me an animated form
That speaks a mind within.

A face where awful honor shines,
Where sense and sweetness move,

And angel innocence refines
  The tenderness of love.

These are the soul of beauty's frame;
  Without whose vital aid
Unfinished all her features seem,
  And all her roses dead.

But, ah! when both their charms unite,
  How perfect is the view,
With every image of delight,
  With graces ever new!

Of power to charm the greatest woe,
  The wildest rage control,
Diffusing mildness o'er the brow,
  And raptures through the soul.

Their power but faintly to express
  All language must despair;
But go, behold Arpasia's face,
  And read it perfect there.

SUPERIORITY OF THE AFFECTIONS.

FROM "THE SPANISH STUDENT," BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

WHAT I most prize in woman
  Is her affections, not her intellect.
The intellect is finite; but the affections
Are infinite, and can not be exhausted.
Compare me with the greatest men on earth;
What am I? Why, a pygmy among giants!
But if thou lovest—mark me! I say lovest,

The greatest of thy sex excels thee not!
The world of the affections is thy world,
Not that of man's ambitions. In that stillness
Which most becomes a woman, calm and holy,
Thou sittest by the fireside of the heart,
Feeding its flame. The element of fire
Is pure. It can not change nor hide its nature,
But burns as brightly in a gypsy camp
As in a palace hall.

RIGHT PURSUITS OF WOMEN.

FROM "THE SEASONS," BY JAMES THOMSON.

Following a description of the Chase.

BUT if the rougher sex by this fierce sport
Is hurried wild, let not such horrid joy
E'er stain the bosom of the British fair.
Far be the spirit of the chase from them.
Uncomely courage, unbeseeming skill;
To spring the fence, to rein the prancing steed;
The cap, the whip, the masculine attire;
In which they roughen to the sense, and all
The winning softness of their sex is lost.
In them 'tis graceful to dissolve at woe;
With every motion, every word, to wave
Quick o'er the kindling cheek the ready blush;
And from the smallest violence to shrink
Unequal, then the loveliest in their fears;
And by this silent adulation, soft,
To their protection more engaging man.
Oh, may their eyes no miserable sight,

Save weeping lovers, see! a nobler game,
Through Love's enchanting wiles pursued, yet fled
In chase ambiguous. May their tender limbs
Float in the loose simplicity of dress!
And, fashioned all to harmony, alone
Know they to seize the captivated soul,
In rapture warbled from love-breathing lips;
To teach the lute to languish; with smooth step,
Disclosing motion in its every charm,
To swim along, and swell the mazy dance;
To train the foliage o'er the snowy lawn;
To guide the pencil, turn the tuneful page;
To lend new flavor to the fruitful year,
And heighten Nature's dainties; in their race
To rear their graces into second life;
To give society its highest taste;
Well-ordered home man's best delight to make;
And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
With every gentle care-eluding art,
To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,
And sweeten all the toils of human life:
This be the female dignity and praise.

QUALITIES OF WOMAN.

FROM "CHARACTERS OF WOMEN," BY ALEXANDER POPE.

AH! friend! to dazzle let the vain design;
To raise the thought, and touch the heart, be thine!
That charm shall grow, while what fatigues the ring,
Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing:
So when the sun's broad beam has tired the sight,
All mild ascends the moon's more sober light,

Serene in virgin modesty she shines,
And unobserved the glaring orb declines.
Oh! blessed with temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day:
She, who can love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear;
She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humor most, when she obeys;
Let fops or Fortune fly which way they will,
Disdains all loss of tickets, or codille;
Spleen, vapors, or small-pox, above them all,
And mistress of herself, though china fall.
And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a contradiction still.
Heaven when it strives to polish all it can
Its last best work, but forms a softer man;
Picks from each sex, to make the favorite blest,
Your love of pleasure, our desire of rest:
Blends, in exception to all general rules,
Your taste of follies, with our scorn of fools:
Reserve with frankness, art with truth allied,
Courage with softness, modesty with pride;
Fixed principles, with fancy ever new;
Shakes all together, and produces—you.

ANIMATION IN WOMAN.

BY LORD BYRON.

AT once I'll tell thee our opinion
Concerning woman's soft dominion:

Howe'er we gaze with admiration
On eyes of blue or lips carnation,
Howe'er the flowing locks attract us,
Howe'er those beauties may distract us,
Still fickle, we are prone to rove,
These can not fix our souls to love:
It is not too severe a stricture
To say they form a pretty picture;
But wouldst thou see the secret chain
Which binds us in your humble train,
To hail you queens of all creation,
Know, in a word, 'tis *Animation.*

MAIDENHOOD.

BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

MAIDEN! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run!

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse!

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar?

O, thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares!
Care and age come unawares!

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand;
Gates of brass can not withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds that can not heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

IRENÉ.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

HERS is a spirit deep, and crystal-clear,
Calmly beneath her earnest face it lies,
Free without boldness, meek without a fear,
Quicker to look than speak its sympathies;
Far down into her large and patient eyes
I gaze, deep-drinking of the infinite,
As, in the mid-watch of a clear, still night,
I look into the fathomless blue skies.

So circled lives she with Love's holy light,
That from the shade of self she walketh free;
The garden of her soul still keepeth she
An Eden where the snake did never enter;
She hath a natural, wise sincerity,
A simple truthfulness, and these have lent her
A dignity as moveless as the center;
So that no influence of earth can stir
Her steadfast courage, nor can take away

The holy peacefulness which, night and day,
Unto her queenly soul doth minister.

Most gentle is she; her large charity
(An all unwitting, childlike gift in her)
Not freer is to give than meek to bear;
And, though herself not unacquaint with care,
Hath in her heart wide room for all that be—
Her heart that hath no secrets of its own,
But open is as eglantine full blown.
Cloudless forever is her brow serene,
Speaking calm hope and trust within her, whence
Welleth a noiseless spring of patience,
That keepeth all her life so fresh, so green
And full of holiness, that every look,
The greatness of her woman's soul revealing,
Unto me bringeth blessing, and a feeling
As when I read in God's own holy book.

A graciousness in giving that doth make
The small'st gift greatest, and a sense most meek
Of worthiness that doth not fear to take
From others, but which always fears to speak
Its thanks in utterance, for the giver's sake;—
The deep religion of a thankful heart,
Which rests instinctively in Heaven's clear law
With a full peace, that never can depart
From its own steadfastness;—a holy awe
For holy things,—not those which men call holy,
But such as are revealèd to the eyes
Of a true woman's soul bent down and lowly
Before the face of daily mysteries;—

A love that blossoms soon, but ripens slowly
To the full goldenness of fruitful prime,
Enduring with a firmness that defies
All shallow tricks of circumstance and time,
By a sure insight knowing where to cling,
And where it clingeth never withering;—
These are Irené's dowry, which no fate
Can shake from their serene, deep-builded state.

In-seeing sympathy is hers, which chasteneth
No less than loveth, scorning to be bound
With fear of blame, and yet which ever hasteneth
To pour the balm of kind looks on the wound,
If they be wounds which such sweet teaching makes,
Giving itself a pang for others' sakes;
No want of faith, that chills with sidelong eye,
Hath she: no jealousy, no Levite pride
That passeth by on the other side;
For in her soul there never dwelt a lie.
Right from the hand of God her spirit came
Unstained, and she hath ne'er forgotten whence
It came, nor wandered far from thence,
But laboreth to keep her still the same,
Near to her place of birth, that she may not
Soil her white raiment with an earthly spot.

Yet sets she not her soul so steadily
Above, that she forgets her ties to earth,
But her whole thought would almost seem to be
How to make glad one lowly human hearth;
For with a gentle courage she doth strive
In thought and word and feeling so to live

As to make earth next heaven; and her heart
Herein doth show its most exceeding worth,
That, bearing in our frailty her just part,
She hath not shrunk from evils of this life,
But hath gone calmly forth into the strife,
And all its sins and sorrows hath withstood
With lofty strength of patient womanhood:
For this I love her great soul more than all,
That, being bound, like us, with earthly thrall,
She walks so bright and Heaven-like therein,
Too wise, too meek, too womanly to sin.

Like a lone star through riven storm-clouds seen
By sailors, tempest-tost upon the sea,
Telling of rest and peaceful havens nigh,
Unto my soul her star-like soul hath been,
Her sight as full of hope and calm to me;—
For she unto herself hath builded high
A home serene, wherein to lay her head,
Earth's noblest thing, a woman perfected.

VOTIVE WREATHS.

FROM "EPIPSYCHIDION."

(Verses addressed to the noble and unfortunate Lady Emilia Viviani, imprisoned in the Convent of St. Anne, Pisa.)

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

SWEET spirit! Sister of that orphan one,
Whose empire is the name thou weepest on,
In my heart's temple I suspend to thee
These votive wreaths of withered memory.

Poor captive bird! who, from thy narrow cage,
Pourest such music, that it might assuage
The rugged hearts of those who prisoned thee,
Were they not deaf to all sweet melody,
This song shall be thy rose; its petals pale
Are dead, indeed, my adored Nightingale!
But soft and fragrant is the faded blossom,
And it has no thorn left to wound thy bosom.

High, spirit-winged Heart! who dost forever
Beat thine unfeeling bars with vain endeavor,
Till those bright plumes of thought, in which arrayed
It over-soared this low and worldly shade,
Lie shattered; and thy panting, wounded breast
Stains with dear blood its unmaternal nest!
I weep vain tears; blood would less bitter be,
Yet poured forth gladlier, could it profit thee.

Seraph of heaven! too gentle to be human,
Veiling beneath that radiant form of Woman
All that is insupportable in thee
Of light, and love, and immortality!
Sweet Benediction in the eternal Curse!
Veiled Glory of this lampless Universe!
Thou Moon beyond the clouds! Thou living Form
Among the Dead! Thou Star above the Storm!
Thou Wonder, and thou Beauty, and thou Terror!
Thou Harmony of Nature's art! Thou Mirror
In whom, as in the splendor of the Sun,
All shapes look glorious which thou gazest on!
Ay, even the dim words which obscure thee now
Flash, lightning-like, with unaccustomed glow;

I pray thee that thou blot from this sad song
All of its much mortality and wrong,
With those clear drops which start like sacred dew
From the twin lights thy sweet soul darkens through,
Weeping, till sorrow becomes ecstasy:
Then smile on it, so that it may not die.

I never thought before my death to see
Youth's vision thus made perfect. Emily,
I love thee; though the world by no thin name
Will hide that love, from its unvalued shame.
Would we two had been twins of the same mother!
Or, that the name my heart lent to another
Could be a sister's bond for her and thee,
Blending two beams of one eternity!
Yet were one lawful and the other true,
These names, though dear, could paint not, as is due,
How beyond refuge I am thine. Ah me!
I am not thine: I am a part of *thee!*

Sweet Lamp! my moth-like Muse has burnt its wings;
Or, like a dying swan who soars and sings,
Young Love should teach Time, in his own gray style,
All that thou art. Art thou not void of guile,
A lovely soul formed to be blest and bless?
A well of sealed and secret happiness,
Whose waters like blithe light and music are,
Vanquishing dissonance and gloom? a Star
Which moves not in the moving heavens, alone?
A smile amid dark frowns? a gentle tone
Amid rude voices? a belovèd Light?
A Solitude, a Refuge, a Delight?

A Lute, which those whom Love has taught to play
Make music on, to soothe the roughest day
And lull fond grief asleep? a buried treasure?
A cradle of young thoughts of wingless pleasure?
A violet-shrouded grave of Woe?—I measure
The world of fancies, seeking one like thee,
And find—alas! mine own infirmity.

She met me, Stranger, upon life's rough way,
And lured me toward sweet Death; as Night by Day,
Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift Hope,
Led into light, life, peace. An antelope,
In the suspended impulse of its lightness,
Were less ethereally light; the brightness
Of her divinest presence trembles through
Her limbs, as underneath a cloud of dew
Embodied in the windless Heaven of June
Amid the splendor-wingèd stars, the Moon
Burns, inextinguishably beautiful;
And from her lips, as from a hyacinth full
Of honey-dew, a liquid murmur drops,
Killing the sense with passion; sweet as stops
Of planetary music heard in trance.
In her mild lights the starry spirits dance,
The sunbeams of those wells which ever leap
Under the lightnings of the soul—too deep
For the brief fathom-line of thought or sense.
The glory of her being, issuing thence,
Stains the dead, blank, cold air with a warm shade
Of unentangled intermixture, made
By Love, of light and motion: one intense
Diffusion, one serene Omnipresence,

Whose flowing outlines mingle in their flowing
Around her cheeks and utmost fingers glowing
With the unintermitted blood, which there
Quivers (as in a fleece of snow-like air
The crimson pulse of living morning quiver),
Continuously prolonged, and ending never,
Till they are lost, and in that Beauty furled
Which penetrates and clasps and fills the world;
Scarce visible from extreme loveliness.
Warm fragrance seems to fall from her light dress,
And her loose hair; and where some heavy tress
The air of her own speed has disentwined,
The sweetness seems to satiate the faint wind;
And in the soul a wild odor is felt,
Beyond the sense, like fiery dews that melt
Into the bosom of a frozen bud.—
See where she stands! a mortal shape indued
With love and life and light and deity,
And motion which may change but can not die;
And image of some bright Eternity;
A shadow of some golden dream; a Splendor
Leaving the third sphere pilotless; a tender
Reflection of the eternal Moon of Love
Under whose motion life's dull billows move;
A Metaphor of Spring and Youth and Morning,
A vision like incarnate April, warning
With smiles and tears, Frost the Anatomy
Into his summer grave.

SECOND EVENING

SECOND EVENING.

In which are tendered "A Handful of Pleasant Delights," and sundry "Dainty Devices," by the Old English Poets, from Spenser to Waller, all to the Glory of Woman.

THE BRIDE.

FROM "EPITHALAMION," BY EDMUND SPENSER.

WAKE now, my love, awake; for it is time;
The rosy morn long since left Tithon's bed,
All ready to her silver coach to climb;
And Phœbus 'gins to shew his glorious head.
Hark! now the cheerful birds do chant their lays,
And carol of Love's praise.
The merry lark her matins sings aloft;
The thrush replies; the mavis descant plays;
The ouzel shrills; the ruddock warbles soft;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this day's merriment.
Ah! my dear love, why do you sleep thus long,
When meeter were that you should now awake,
T' await the coming of your joyous make,
And hearken to the birds' love-learned song,
The dewy leaves among!
For they of joy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

My love is now awake out of her dreams,
And her fair eyes, like stars that dimmed were
With darksome cloud, now shew their goodly beams
More bright than Hesperus his head doth rear.
Come now, ye damsels, daughters of delight,
Help quickly her to dight:
But first come, ye fair Hours, which were begot,
In Jove's sweet paradise, of Day and Night;
Which do the seasons of the year allot,
And all, that ever in this world is fair,
Do make and still repair;
And ye three handmaids of the Cyprian Queen,
The which do still adorn her beauties' pride,
Help to adorn my beautifullest bride:
And, as ye her array, still throw between
Some graces to be seen;
And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
The whiles the woods shall answer, and your echo ring.

Now is my love all ready forth to come:
Let all the virgins therefore well await;
And ye, fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
Prepare yourselves, for he is coming straight.
Set all your things in seemly good array,
Fit for so joyful day:
The joyfull'st day that ever sun did see.
Fair Sun! shew forth thy favorable ray,
And let thy lifeful heat not fervent be,
For fear of burning her sunshiny face,
Her beauty to disgrace.
O fairest Phœbus! father of the Muse!
If ever I did honor thee aright,

Or sing the thing that might thy mind delight,
Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse,
But let this day, let this one day be mine;
Let all the rest be thine.
Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
That all the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

* * * * * * * * *

Lo! where she comes along with portly pace,
Like Phœbe, from her chamber of the east,
Arising forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
So well it her beseems, that ye would ween
Some angel she had been.
Her long loose yellow locks, like golden wire,
Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers atween,
Do like a golden mantle her attire;
And being crowned with a garland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.
Her modest eyes, abashèd to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixèd are;
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathless do ye still loud her praises sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Tell me, ye merchants' daughters, did ye see
So fair a creature in your town before?
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
Adorned with beauty's grace, and virtue's store;

Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
Her forehead ivory white,
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath rudded,
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,
Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncrudded.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your echo ring?

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively sprite,
Garnished with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonished like to those which read
Medusa's mazeful head.
There dwells sweet Love, and constant Chastity,
Unspotted Faith, and comely Womanhood,
Regard of Honor, and mild Modesty;
There Virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone,
The which the base affections do obey,
And yield their services unto her will;
Ne thought of things uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures,
And unrevealèd pleasures,
Then would ye wonder and her praises sing,
That all the woods would answer, and your echo ring.

SONNET.

BY SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

O HAPPY Thames that didst my Stella bear;
I saw myself with many a smiling line
Upon thy cheerful face, joy's livery wear,
While those fair planets on thy streams did shine;
The boat for joy could not to dance forbear;
While wanton winds, with beauties so divine
Ravished, staid not till in her golden hair
They did themselves, oh sweetest prison! twine;
And fain those Eol's youth there would their stay
Have made, but forced by nature still to fly,
First did with puffing kiss those locks display.
She so dishevelled, blushed: from window I,
With sight thereof, cried out, oh fair disgrace!
Let honor's self to thee grant highest place.

A PRAISE OF HIS LADY.

BY JOHN HEYWOOD.

GIVE place, you ladies, and be gone;
Boast not yourselves at all!
For here at hand approacheth One
Whose face will stain you all.

The virtue of her lively looks
Excels the precious stone;
I wish to have none other books
To read or look upon.

In each of her two crystal eyes
Smileth a naked boy;

It would you all in heart suffice
To see that lamp of joy.

I think Nature hath lost the mould,
Where she her shape did take;
Or else I doubt if Nature could
So fair a creature make.

She may be well compared
Unto the Phœnix kind,
Whose like was never seen or heard,
That any man can find.

In life she is Diana chaste;
In truth Penelope;
In word and eke in deed steadfast;
What will you more we say?

If all the world were sought so far,
Who could find such a wight?
Her beauty twinkleth like a star
Within the frosty night.

Her rosial color comes and goes
With such a comely grace,
More ruddier too than doth the rose,
Within her lovely face.

At Bacchus' feast none shall her meet,
Nor at no wanton play,
Nor gazing in an open street,
Nor gadding as astray.

The modest mirth that she doth use,
  Is mixed with shamefastness;
All vice she wholly doth refuse,
  And hateth idleness.

O Lord! it is a world to see
  How virtue can repair,
And deck her in such modesty,
  Whom Nature made so fair.

Truly she doth as far exceed
  Our women now-a-days,
As doth the gilly-flower a weed,
  And more a thousand ways.

How might I do to get a graff
  Of this unspotted tree?
For all the rest are plain but chaff
  Which seem good corn to be.

This gift alone I shall her give:
  When Death doth what he can,
Her honest fame shall ever live
  Within the mouth of man.

SAMELA.

BY ROBERT GREENE.

LIKE to Diana in her summer weed,
Girt with a crimson robe of brightest dye,
Goes fair Samela.

Whiter than be the flocks that straggling feed
When washed by Arethusa faint they lie,
Is fair Samela.

As fair Aurora in her morning grey,
Decked with the ruddy glister of her love,
Is fair Samela.

Like lovely Thetis on a calmèd day,
When as her brightness Neptune's fancy move,
Shines fair Samela.

Her tresses gold, her eyes like glassy streams,
Her teeth are pearl, the breasts are ivory,
Of fair Samela.

Her cheeks, like rose and lily, yield forth gleams,
Her brows' bright arches framed of ebony:
Thus fair Samela

Passeth fair Venus in her bravest hue,
And Juno in the show of majesty,
For she's Samela,

Pallas in wit; all three, if you well view,
For beauty, wit, and matchless dignity
Yield to Samela.

MENAPHON'S ECLOGUE.

BY ROBERT GREENE.

TOO weak the wit, too slender is the brain,
That means to mark the power and worth of love;
Not one that lives, except he hap to prove,
Can tell the sweet, or tell the secret pain.

Yet I that have been 'prentice to the grief,
Like to the cunning sea-man from afar,
By guess will take the beauty of that star,
Whose influence must yield me chief relief.

You censors of the glory of my dear,
With reverence and lowly bend of knee,
Attend and mark what her perfections be ;
For in my words my fancies shall appear.

Her locks are plighted like the fleece of wool
That Jason with his Grecian mates achieved ;
As pure as gold, yet not from gold derived,
As full of sweets, as sweet of sweets is full.

Her brows are pretty tables of conceit,
Where Love his records of delight doth quote ;
On them her dallying locks do daily float,
As Love full oft doth feed upon the bait.

Her eyes, fair eyes, like to the purest lights
That animate the sun, or cheer the day ;
In whom the shining sunbeams brightly play,
Whiles fancy doth on them divine delights.

Her cheeks like ripened lilies steeped in wine,
Or fair pomegranate kernels washed in milk,
Or snow-white threads in nets of crimson silk,
Or gorgeous clouds upon the sun's decline.

Her lips are roses over-washed with dew,
Or like the purple of Narcissus' flower,
No frost their fair, no wind doth waste their power,
But by her breath her beauties do renew.

Her crystal chin like to the purest mould,
  Enchased with dainty daisies soft and white,
  Where fancy's fair pavilion once is pight,
Whereas embraced his beauties he doth hold.

Her neck like to an ivory shining tower,
  Where through with azure veins sweet nectar runs,
  Or like the down of swans where Senesse woons,
Or like delight that doth itself devour.

Her body, beauty's best esteemèd bower,
  Delicious, comely, dainty, without stain;
  The thought whereof (not touch) hath wrought my pain;
Whose fair all fair and beauties doth devour.

ROSALYND.

BY THOMAS LODGE.

LIKE to the clear in highest sphere,
  Where all imperial beauty shines,
Of self-same color is her hair,
  Whether unfolded or in twines;

Her eyes are sapphires set in snow,
  Resembling heaven by every wink;
The gods do fear when as they glow,
  And I do tremble when I think.

Her cheeks are like the blushing cloud
  That beautifies Aurora's face,
Or like the silver-crimson shroud
  That Phœbus' smiling looks doth grace;

Her lips are like two budded roses,
Whom ranks of lilies neighbour nigh,
Within whose bounds she balm encloses
Apt to entice a deity.

Her neck like to a stately tower,
Where Love himself imprisoned lies,
To watch for glances, every hour,
From her divine and sacred eyes.

With orient pearl, with ruby red,
With marble white, with sapphire blue,
Her body every way is fed,
Yet soft to touch, and sweet in view;

Nature herself her shape admires;
The gods are wounded in her sight;
And Love forsakes his heavenly fires,
And at her eyes his brand doth light.

WHO IS SYLVIA?

FROM "TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA," BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

WHO is Sylvia? what is she,
That all the swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heavens such grace did lend her
That she might adorèd be.

Is she kind, or is she fair?
For beauty lives with kindness.
Love does to her eyes repair

To help him of his blindness—
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Sylvia let us sing
That Sylvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling;
To her let us garlands bring.

CHARIS.

BY BEN JONSON.

(Ben Jonson has, under the title of "A Celebration of Charis," ten lyric poems, which, says one critic, "will not suffer in comparison with the most perfect love-poems of antiquity." Of these lyrics, "Charis's Triumph" and a "Discourse with Cupid" have been selected.)

I.

TRIUMPH OF CHARIS.

SEE the chariot at hand here of Love,
Wherein my lady rideth!
Each that draws is a swan or a dove,
And well the car Love guideth.
As she goes, all hearts do duty
Unto her beauty;
And enamored do wish, so they might
But enjoy such a sight,
That they still were to run by her side,
Through swords, through seas, whither she would ride.

Do but look on her eyes, they do light
All that Love's world compriseth!
Do but look on her hair, it is bright
As Love's star when it riseth!

Do but mark, her forehead's smoother
Than words that soothe her!
And from her archèd brows, such a grace
Sheds itself through the face,
As alone there triumphs to the life
All the gain, all the good, of the elements' strife.

Have you seen but a bright lily grow,
Before rude hands have touched it?
Have you marked but the fall of the snow,
Before the soil hath smutched it?
Have you felt the wool of the beaver,
Or swan's down ever?
Or have smelt o' the bud o' the brier?
Or the nard in the fire?
Or have tasted the bag of the bee?
O so white! O so soft! O so sweet is she!

II.

DISCOURSE WITH CUPID.

NOBLEST Charis, you that are
Both my fortune and my star!
And do govern more my blood,
Than the various moon the flood!
Hear what late discourse of you
Love and I have had; and true.
'Mongst my muses finding me,
Where he chanced your name to see
Set, and to this softer strain:
"Sure," said he, "if I have brain,
This, here sung, can be no other
By description but my mother!

So hath Homer praised her hair;
So Anacreon drawn the air
Of her face, and made to rise,
Just about her sparkling eyes,
Both her brows, bent like my bow.
By her looks I do her know,
Which you call my shafts. And see!
Such my mother's blushes be,
As the bath your verse discloses
In her cheeks of milk and roses;
Such as oft I wanton in.
And above her even chin,
Have you placed the bank of kisses
Where, you say, men gather blisses,
Ripened with a breath more sweet
Than when flowers and west winds meet.
Nay, her white and polished neck,
With the lace that doth it deck,
Is my mother's! hearts of slain
Lovers, made into a chain!
And between each rising breast
Lies the valley called my nest,
Where I sit and proyne my wings
After flight; and put new strings
To my shafts! Her very name,
With my mother's is the same."
"I confess all," I replied,
"And the glass hangs by her side,
And the girdle 'bout her waist,
All is Venus; save unchaste.
But, alas! thou seest the least
Of her good, who is the best

Of her sex; but couldst thou, Love,
Call to mind the forms that strove
For the apple, and those three
Make in one, the same were she.
For this beauty yet doth hide
Something more than thou hast spied.
Outward grace weak Love beguiles:
She is Venus when she smiles,
But she's Juno when she walks,
And Minerva when she talks."

PICTURES OF THE BODY AND OF THE MIND.

BY BEN JONSON.

(Series of lyrics seem to have been a favorite form with Ben Jonson. For, in addition to the ten poems addressed to Charis, he wrote a series addressed to the Lady Venetia Digby, who is reported to have been a lady of great beauty, which he entitled "Eupheme; or, the Fair Fame." Unfortunately, five of this series have been irretrievably lost. The third and fourth are here presented.)

I.

THE PICTURE OF THE BODY.

SITTING and ready to be drawn,
What makes these velvets, silks, and lawn,
Embroideries, feathers, fringes, lace,
When every limb takes like a face?—

Send these suspected helps to aid
Some form defective, or decayed;
The beauty, without falsehood fair,
Needs naught to clothe it but the air.

Yet something to the painter's view
Were fitly interposed; so new,

He shall, if he can understand,
Work by my fancy, with his hand.

Draw first a cloud, all save her neck,
And out of that make day to break;
Till like her face it do appear,
And men may think all light rose there.

Then let the beams of that disperse
The cloud, and show the universe;
But at such distance, as the eye
May rather yet adore, than spy.

The heaven designed, draw next a spring,
With all that youth, or it can bring;
Four rivers branching forth like seas,
And Paradise confining these.

Last draw the circles of this globe,
And let there be a starry robe
Of constellations 'bout her hurled;
And thou hast painted Beauty's world.

But, painter, see thou do not sell
A copy of this piece; nor tell
Whose 'tis; but if it favor find,
Next sitting we will draw her mind.

II.

THE PICTURE OF THE MIND.

PAINTER, you're come, but pray be gone;
Now I have better thought thereon,
This work I can perform alone;
And give you reasons more than one.

Not that your art I do refuse;
But here I may no colors use.
Beside, your hand will never hit,
To draw a thing that can not sit.

You could make shift to paint an eye,
An eagle towering in the sky,
The sun, a sea, or soundless pit;
But these are like a mind, not it.

No, to express this mind to sense,
Would ask a Heaven's intelligence;
Since nothing can report that flame,
But what's of kin to whence it came.

Sweet Mind, then speak yourself, and say,
As you go on, by what brave way
Our sense do you with knowledge fill,
And yet remain our wonder still.

I call you, Muse, now make it true;
Henceforth may every line be you;
That all may say, that see the frame,
This is no picture, but the same.

A mind so pure, so perfect fine,
As 'tis not radiant, but divine;
And so disdaining any trier,
'Tis got where it can try the fire.

There, high exalted in the sphere,
As it another nature were,
It moveth all; and makes a flight
As circular as infinite.

Whose notions when it will express
In speech, it is with that excess
Of grace, and music to the ear,
As what it spoke, it planted there.

The voice so sweet, the words so fair,
As some soft chime had stroked the air;
And though the sound had parted thence,
Still left an echo in the sense.

But that a mind so rapt, so high,
So swift, so pure, should yet apply
Itself to us, and come so nigh
Earth's grossness; there's the how and why.

Is it because it sees us dull,
And sunk in clay here, it would pull
Us forth, by some celestial sleight,
Up to her own sublimèd height?

Or hath she here, upon the ground,
Some Paradise or palace found,
In all the bounds of beauty fit
For her t' inhabit? There is it.

Thrice happy house, thou hast receipt
For this so lofty form, so straight,
So polished, perfect, round, and even,
As it slid molded off from heaven.

Not swelling, like the ocean proud,
But stooping gently, as a cloud,
As smooth as oil poured forth, and calm
As showers, and sweet as drops of balm.

Smooth, soft, and sweet, in all a flood,
Where it may run to any good;
And where it stays, it there becomes
A nest of odorous spice and gums.

In action, wingèd as the wind;
In rest, like spirits left behind
Upon a bank or field of flowers,
Begotten by the wind and showers.

In thee, fair mansion, let it rest,
Yet know, with what thou art possessed;
Thou, entertaining in thy breast
But such a mind, mak'st God thy guest.

A VISION OF BEAUTY.

FROM "THE NEW INN," BY BEN JONSON.

IT was a beauty that I saw,
So pure, so perfect, as the frame
Of all the universe were lame,
To that one figure could I draw,
Or give least line of it a law!

A skein of silk without a knot!
A fair march made without a halt!
A curious form without a fault!
A printed book without a blot!
All beauty!—and without a spot.

ON LUCY, COUNTESS OF BEDFORD.

BY BEN JONSON.

THIS morning, timely rapt with holy fire,
I thought to form unto my zealous Muse,
What kind of creature I could most desire,
To honor, serve, and love, as poets use.
I meant to make her fair, and free, and wise,
Of greatest blood, and yet more good than great;
I meant the day-star should not brighter rise,
Nor lend like influence from his lucent seat.
I meant she should be courteous, facile, sweet,
Hating that solemn vice of greatness, pride;
I meant each softest virtue there should meet,
Fit in that softer bosom to reside.
Only a learnèd and a manly soul
I purposed her, that should, with even powers,
The rock, the spindle, and the shears control
Of Destiny, and spin her own free hours.
Such when I meant to feign, and wished to see,
My Muse bade BEDFORD write, and that was she!

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

FROM "WOMEN PLEASED," BY BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

OH, fair sweet face! oh, eyes celestial bright,
Twin stars in Heaven, that now adorn the night!
Oh, fruitful lips, where cherries ever grow,
And damask cheeks, where all sweet beauties blow!
Oh, thou, from head to foot divinely fair!
Cupid's most cunning nets made of that hair;

And, as he weaves himself for curious eyes,
"Oh me, oh me, I'm caught myself!" he cries:
Sweet rest about thee, sweet and golden sleep,
Soft peaceful thoughts, your hourly watches keep,
Whilst I in wonder sing this sacrifice,
To beauty sacred, and those angel eyes!

SONG.

FROM "THE FALSE ONE," BY BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

LOOK out, bright eyes, and bless the air!
Even in shadows you are fair.
Shut-up beauty is like fire,
That breaks out clearer still and higher.
Though your beauty be confined,
And soft Love a prisoner bound,
Yet the beauty of your mind
Neither check nor chain hath found.
Look out nobly, then, and dare
Ev'n the fetters that you wear!

THE SONG OF TAVY.

BY WILLIAM BROWNE.

AS careful merchants do expecting stand
(After long time and merry gales of wind)
Upon the place where their brave ship must land,
So wait I for the vessel of my mind.

Upon a great adventure is it bound,
Whose safe return will valued be at more
Than all the wealthy prizes which have crowned
The golden wishes of an age before.

Out of the East jewels of wealth she brings,
  Th' unvalued diamond of her sparkling eye
Wants in the treasure of all Europe's kings;
  And were it mine they nor their crowns should buy.

The sapphires ringed on her panting breast
  Run as rich veins of ore about the mold,
And are in sickness with a pale possest
  So true, for them I should disvalue gold.

The melting rubies on her cherry lip
  Are of such power to hold, that, as one day
Cupid flew thirsty by, he stooped to sip,
  And, fastened there, could never get away.

The sweets of Candie are no sweets to me,
  When hers I taste, nor the perfumes of price,
Robbed from the happy shrubs of Araby,
  As her sweet breath, so powerful to entice.

Oh, hasten then, and if thou be not gone
  Unto that wishèd traffic through the main,
My powerful sighs shall quickly drive thee on,
  And then begin to draw thee back again.

If in the mean rude waves have it opprest,
It shall suffice, I ventured at the best.

TO HIS MISTRESS.

BY SIR HENRY WOTTON.

YOU meaner beauties of the night,
That poorly satisfy our eyes

More by your number than your light!
You common people of the skies!
What are you, when the sun shall rise?

You curious chanters of the wood,
That warble forth Dame Nature's lays,
Thinking your passions understood
By your weak accents! what's your praise
When Philomel her voice shall raise?

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known,
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own!
What are you when the rose is blown?

So, when my mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty of her mind;
By virtue first, then choice, a Queen!
Tell me, if she were not designed
Th' eclipse and glory of her kind?

ASK ME NO MORE WHERE JOVE BESTOWS.

SONG, BY THOMAS CAREW.

ASK me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is passed, the fading rose;
For, in your beauty's orient deep,
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For, in pure love, Heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is passed;
For in your sweet, dividing throat
She winters, and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars light
That downward fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixèd become, as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The phœnix builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

JULIA.

BY ROBERT HERRICK.

SOME asked me where the rubies grew,
And nothing did I say,
But with my finger pointed to
The lips of Julia.

Some asked how pearls did grow, and where,
Then spake I to my girl,
To part her lips, and shew me there
The quarelets of pearl.

One asked me where the roses grew,
I bade him not go seek;
But forthwith bade my Julia shew
A bud in either cheek.

DESCRIPTION OF CASTARA.

BY WILLIAM HABINGTON.

LIKE the violet which, alone,
Prospers in some happy shade,
My Castara lives unknown,
To no looser eye betrayed,
For she's to herself untrue,
Who delights i' th' public view.

Such is her beauty, as no arts
Have enriched with borrowed grace;
Her high birth no pride imparts,
For she blushes in her place.
Folly boasts a glorious blood,
She is noblest, being good.

Cautious, she knew never yet
What a wanton courtship meant;
Nor speaks loud, to boast her wit;
In her silence eloquent:
Of herself survey she takes,
But 'tween men no difference makes.

She obeys with speedy will
Her grave parents' wise commands;
And so innocent, that ill
She nor acts, nor understands:
Women's feet run still astray,
If once to ill they know the way.

She sails by that rock, the Court,
Where oft Honor splits her mast;

And retiredness thinks the port,
Where her fame may anchor cast:
Virtue safely can not sit,
Where vice is enthroned for wit.

She holds that day's pleasure best,
Where sin waits not on delight;
Without masque, or ball, or feast,
Sweetly spends a winter's night:
O'er that darkness, whence is thrust
Prayer and sleep, oft governs lust.

She her throne makes reason climb,
While wild passions captive lie:
And, each article of time,
Her pure thoughts to Heaven fly:
All her vows religious be,
And her love she vows to me.

THE BRIDE.

FROM "A BALLAD OF A WEDDING," BY SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

THE maid, and thereby hangs a tale,
For such a maid no Whitsun ale
Could ever yet produce:
No grape that's kindly ripe could be
So round, so plump, so soft as she,
Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on, which they did bring;
It was too wide a peck:

And, to say truth—for out it must—
It looked like the great collar—just—
About our young colt's neck.

Her feet beneath her petticoat,
Like little mice, stole in and out,
As if they feared the light:
But O! she dances such a way!
No sun upon an Easter-day
Is half so fine a sight.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No daisy makes comparison;
(Who sees them is undone;)
For streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Cath'rine pear,
The side that's next the sun.

Her lips were red; and one was thin,
Compared to that was next her chin,
Some bee had stung it newly;
But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,
I durst no more upon them gaze,
Than on the sun in July.

Her mouth so small, when she does speak,
Thou'dst swear her teeth her words did break,
That they might passage get:
But she so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours, or better,
And are not spent a whit.

SONG.

BY RICHARD LOVELACE.

AMARANTHA, sweet and fair,
Oh, braid no more that shining hair!
Let it fly, as unconfined,
As its calm ravisher, the wind;
Who hath left his darling, th' east,
To wanton o'er that spicy nest.
Every tress must be confest,
But neatly tangled, at the best;
Like a clew of golden thread
Most excellently ravelèd.
Do not, then, wind up that light
In ribbons, and o'ercloud in night,
Like the sun's in early ray;
But shake your head, and scatter day!

UPON COMBING THE HAIR.

BY LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY.

BREAKING from under that thy cloudy veil,
Open and shine yet more, shine out more clear,
Thou glorious, golden beam of darling hair,
Even till my wonder-stricken senses fail.

Shine out in light, and shine those rays on far,
Thou much more fair than is the Queen of Love
When she doth comb her on her sphere above,
And from a planet turns a blazing star.

Nay, thou art greater, too—more destiny
Depends on thee than on her influence;

No hair thy fatal hand doth now dispense,
But to some one a thread of life must be.

While gracious unto me, thou both dost sunder
Those glories which, if they united were,
Might have amazèd sense, and shew'st each hair,
Which, if alone, had been too great a wonder.

But stay, methinks new beauties do arise,
While she withdraws these glories which were spread;
Wonder of beauties, set thy radiant head,
And strike out day from thy yet fairer eyes.

MY ALL.

FROM "A PASTORAL COURTSHIP," BY THOMAS RANDOLPH.

NOW let me sit, and fix mine eyes
On thee, that art my paradise,
Thou art my all; my spring remains
In the fair violets of thy veins;
And that you are my summer's day,
Ripe cherries in thy lips display.
And when for autumn I would seek,
'Tis in the apples of thy cheek.
But that which only moves my smart,
Is to see winter in thy heart.
Strange, when at once in one appear
All the four seasons of the year!
I'll clasp that neck, where should be set
A rich and orient carcanet,
But swains are poor; 'admit of, then,
More natural chains—the arms of men.

WOMAN.

BY THOMAS RANDOLPH.

WHY in this work did the Creation rest,
But that Eternal Providence thought you best
Of all his six days' labor? Beasts should do
Homage to man, but man shall wait on you.
You are of comelier sight, of daintier touch,
A tender flesh, and color bright, and such
As Parians see in marble; skin more fair,
More glorious head, and far more glorious hair,
Eyes full of grace and quickness; purer roses
Blush in your cheeks; a milder white composes
Your stately fronts; your breath more sweet than his
Breathes spice, and nectar drops at every kiss.

TO A LADY ADMIRING HERSELF IN A LOOKING-GLASS.

BY THOMAS RANDOLPH.

FAIR lady, when you see the grace
Of beauty in your looking-glass;
A stately forehead, smooth and high,
And full of princely majesty;
A sparkling eye no gem so fair,
Whose luster dims the Cyprian star;
A glorious cheek, divinely sweet,
Wherein both roses kindly meet;
A cherry lip that would entice
Even gods to kiss at any price;
You think no beauty is so rare
That with your shadow might compare;

That your reflection is alone
The thing that men most dote upon.
Madame, alas! your glass doth lie,
And you are much deceived; for I
A beauty know of richer grace—
Sweet, be not angry—'tis your face.
Hence, then, O learn more mild to be,
And leave to lay your blame on me;
If me your real substance move,
When you so much your shadow love,
Wise Nature would not let your eye
Look on her own bright majesty;
Which, had you once but gazed upon,
You could, except yourself, love none:
What then you can not love, let me,
That face I can, you can not see:
Now you have what to love, you'll say;
What then is left for me, I pray?
My face, sweet heart, if it please thee:
That which you can, I can not see:
So either love shall gain his due,
Yours, sweet, in me, and mine in you.

THERE IS A GARDEN IN HER FACE.

BY RICHARD ALISON.

THERE is a garden in her face,
Where roses and white lilies blow;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do grow;
There cherries grow that none may buy,
Till cherry-ripe themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do inclose
  Of orient pearl a double row,
Which, when her lovely laughter shows,
  They look like rose-buds filled with snow:
Yet them no peer nor prince may buy,
Till cherry-ripe themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still;
  Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threat'ning with piercing frowns to kill
  All that approach with eye or hand
These sacred cherries to come nigh,
Till cherry-ripe themselves do cry.

ON A GIRDLE.

BY EDMUND WALLER.

THAT which her slender waist confined
  Shall now my joyful temples bind:
No monarch but would give his crown,
His arms might do what this has done.
It was my heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely dear;
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move!
A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair.
Give me but what this ribbon bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round.

TO AMORET.

BY EDMUND WALLER.

FAIR! that you may truly know,
What you unto Thyrsis owe,
I will tell you how I do
Sacharissa love, and you.
Joy salutes me, when I set
My blest eyes on Amoret:
But with wonder I am strook,
While I on the other look.
If sweet Amoret complains,
I have sense of all her pains:
But for Sacharissa I
Do not only grieve, but die.
All that of myself is mine,
Lovely Amoret! is thine,
Sacharissa's captive fain
Would untie his iron chain,
And, those scorching beams to shun,
To thy gentle shadow run.
If the soul had free election
To dispose of her affection,
I would not thus long have borne
Haughty Sacharissa's scorn:
But 'tis sure some power above,
Which controls our wills in love!
If not a love, a strong desire
To create and spread that fire
In my breast, solicits me,
Beauteous Amoret! for thee.
'Tis amazement more than love,

Which her radiant eyes do move:
If less splendor wait on thine,
Yet they so benignly shine,
I would turn my dazzled sight
To behold their milder light.
But as hard 'tis to destroy
That high flame, as to enjoy:
Which how easily I may do,
Heaven (as eas'ly scaled) does know!
  Amoret! as sweet and good
As the most delicious food,
Which, but tasted, does impart
Life and gladness to the heart.
  Sacharissa's beauty's wine,
Which to madness doth incline:
Such a liquor as no brain
That is mortal can sustain.
  Scarce can I to Heaven excuse
The devotion which I use
Unto that adorèd dame:
For 'tis not unlike the same,
Which I thither ought to send.
So that if it could take end,
'Twould to Heaven itself be due,
To succeed her, and not you;
Who already have of me
All that's not idolatry:
Which, though not so fierce a flame,
Is longer like to be the same.
  Then smile on me, and I will prove
Wonder is shorter-lived than love.

THIRD EVENING

TENNYSON

THIRD EVENING.

Wherein is Exhibited in Fair Array a Notable Gallery of Female Portraits, limned in most Excellent Fashion by Alfred Tennyson.

LILIAN.

1.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Claps her tiny hands above me,
Laughing all she can;
She'll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lilian.

2.

When my passion seeks
Pleasance in love-sighs,
She, looking through and through me
Thoroughly to undo me,
Smiling, never speaks:
So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,
From beneath her gathered wimple
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughters dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks;
Then away she flies.

3.

Prythee weep, May Lilian!
Gayety without eclipse
Wearieth me, May Lilian:
Through my very heart it thrilleth
When from crimson-threaded lips
Silver-treble laughter trilleth:
Prythee weep, May Lilian.

4.

Praying all I can,
If prayers will not hush thee,
Airy Lilian,
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,
Fairy Lilian.

ISABEL.

1.

EYES not down-dropt nor over-bright, but fed
With the clear-pointed flame of chastity,
Clear, without heat, undying, tended by
Pure vestal thoughts in the translucent fane
Of her still spirit; locks not wide-dispread,
Madonna-wise on either side her head;
Sweet lips whereon perpetually did reign
The summer calm of golden charity,
Were fixèd shadows of thy fixèd mood,
Revered Isabel, the crown and head,
The stately flower of female fortitude,
Of perfect wifehood and pure lowlihead.

2.

The intuitive decision of a bright
And thorough-edged intellect to part
Error from crime; a prudence to withhold;
The laws of marriage charactered in gold
Upon the blanched tablets of her heart;
A love still burning upward, giving light
To read those laws; an accent very low
In blandishment, but a most silver flow
Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,
Right to the heart and brain, though undescried,
Winning its way with extreme gentleness
Through all the outworks of suspicious pride;
A courage to endure and to obey;
A hate of gossip parlance, and of sway,
Crowned Isabel, through all her placid life,
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.

3.

The mellowed reflex of a winter moon;
A clear stream flowing with a muddy one,
Till in its onward current it absorbs
With swifter movement and in purer light
The vexed eddies of its wayward brother:
A leaning and upbearing parasite,
Clothing the stem, which else had fallen quite,
With clustered flower-bells and ambrosial orbs
Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each other—
Shadow forth thee;—the world hath not another
(Though all her fairest forms are types of thee,
And thou of God in thy great charity)
Of such a finished chastened purity.

MADELINE.

1.

THOU art not steeped in golden languors,
No trancèd summer calm is thine,
Ever varying Madeline.
Through light and shadow thou dost range,
Sudden glances, sweet and strange,
Delicious spites and darling angers,
And airy forms of flitting change.

2.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore.
Revealings deep and clear are thine
Of wealthy smiles: but who may know
Whether smile or frown be fleeter?
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,
Who may know?
Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow
Light-glooming over eyes divine,
Like little clouds sun-fringed, are thine,
Ever-varying Madeline.
Thy smile and frown are not aloof
From one another,
Each to each is dearest brother;
Hues of the silken sheeny woof
Momently shot into each other,
All the mystery is thine;
Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore,
Ever-varying Madeline.

3.

A subtle, sudden flame,
By veering passion fanned,
About thee breaks and dances;
When I would kiss thy hand,
The flush of angered shame
O'erflows thy calmer glances,
And o'er black brows drops down
A sudden-curvèd frown:
But when I turn away,
Thou, willing me to stay,
Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest;
But, looking fixedly the while,
All my bounding heart entanglest
In a golden-netted smile;
Then in madness and in bliss,
If my lips should dare to kiss
Thy taper fingers amorously,
Again thou blushest angerly;
And o'er black brows drops down
A sudden-curvèd frown.

ADELINE.

1.

MYSTERY of mysteries,
Faintly smiling Adeline,
Scarce of earth nor all divine,
Nor unhappy, nor at rest,
But beyond expression fair
With thy floating flaxen hair;
Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes

Take the heart from out my breast.
Wherefore those dim looks of thine,
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

2.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,
Like a lily which the sun
Looks through in his sad decline,
And a rose-bush leans upon,
Thou that faintly smilest still,
As a Naiad in a well,
Looking at the set of day,
Or a phantom two hours old
Of a maiden past away,
Ere the placid lips be cold?
Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,
Spiritual Adeline?

3.

What hope or fear or joy is thine?
Who talketh with thee, Adeline?
For sure thou art not all alone:
Do beating hearts of salient springs
Keep measure with thine own?
Hast thou heard the butterflies
What they say betwixt their wings?
Or in stillest evenings
With what voice the violet woos
To his heart the silver dews?
Or when little airs arise,
How the merry bluebell rings
To the mosses underneath?
Hast thou looked upon the breath

Of the lilies at sunrise?
Wherefore that faint smile of thine,
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

4.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,
Some spirit of a crimson rose
In love with thee forgets to close
His curtains, wasting odorous sighs
All night long on darkness blind.
What aileth thee? whom waitest thou,
With thy softened, shadowed brow,
And those dew-lit eyes of thine,
Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

5.

Lovest thou the doleful wind
When thou gazest at the skies?
Doth the low-tongued Orient
Wander from the side of the morn,
Dripping with Sabæan spice
On thy pillow, lowly bent
With melodious airs lovelorn,
Breathing Light against thy face,
While his locks a-dropping twined
Round thy neck in subtle ring
Make a carcanet of rays,
And ye talk together still,
In the language wherewith Spring
Letters cowslips on the hill?
Hence that look and smile of thine,
Spiritual Adeline.

MARGARET.

1.

O SWEET pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,
What lit your eyes with tearful power,
Like moonlight on a falling shower?
Who lent you, love, your mortal dower
Of pensive thought and aspect pale,
Your melancholy sweet and frail
As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?
From the westward-winding flood,
From the evening-lighted wood,
From all things outward you have won
A tearful grace, as though you stood
Between the rainbow and the sun.
The very smile before you speak,
That dimples your transparent cheek,
Encircles all the heart, and feedeth
The senses with a still delight
Of dainty sorrow without sound,
Like the tender amber round,
Which the moon about her spreadeth,
Moving through a fleecy night.

2.

You love, remaining peacefully,
To hear the murmur of the strife,
But enter not the toil of life.
Your spirit is the calmèd sea,

Laid by the tumult of the fight.
You are the evening star, alway
Remaining betwixt dark and bright:
Lulled echoes of laborious day
Come to you, gleams of mellow light
Float by you on the verge of night.

3.

What can it matter, Margaret,
What songs below the waning stars
The lion-heart, Plantagenet,
Sang looking through his prison-bars?
Exquisite Margaret, who can tell
The last wild thought of Chatelet,
Just ere the fallen axe did part
The burning brain from the true heart,
Even in her sight he loved so well?

4.

A fairy shield your Genius made
And gave you on your natal day.
Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,
Keeps real sorrow far away.
You move not in such solitudes,
You are not less divine,
But more human in your moods,
Than your twin-sister, Adeline.
Your hair is darker, and your eyes
Touched with a somewhat darker hue,
And less aërially blue,
But ever trembling through the dew
Of dainty-woful sympathies.

5.

O sweet pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,
Come down, come down, and hear me speak;
Tie up the ringlets on your cheek:
The sun is just about to set.
The arching limes are tall and shady,
And faint, rainy lights are seen,
Moving in the leavy beech.
Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,
Where all day long you sit between
Joy and woe, and whisper each.
Or only look across the lawn,
Look out below your bower-eaves,
Look down, and let your blue eyes dawn
Upon me through the jasmine-leaves.

ELEÄNORE.

1.

THY dark eyes opened not,
Nor first revealed themselves to English air,
For there is nothing here,
Which, from the outward to the inward brought,
Molded thy baby thought.
Far off from human neighborhood,
Thou wert born, on a summer morn,
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.
Thy bounteous forehead was not fanned
With breezes from our oaken glades,

But thou wert nursed in some delicious land
Of lavish lights, and floating shades:
And flattering thy childish thought
The oriental fairy brought,
At the moment of thy birth,
From old well-heads of haunted rills,
And the hearts of purple hills,
And shadowed coves on a sunny shore,
The choicest wealth of all the earth,
Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
To deck thy cradle, Eleänore.

2.

Or the yellow-banded bees,
Through half-open lattices
Coming in the scented breeze,
Fed thee, a child, lying alone,
With whitest honey in fairy gardens culled—
A glorious child, dreaming alone,
In silk-soft folds, upon yielding down,
With the hum of swarming bees
Into dreamful slumber lulled.

3.

Who may minister to thee?
Summer herself should minister
To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded
On golden salvers, or it may be,
Youngest Autumn, in a bower
Grape-thickened from the light, and blinded
With many a deep-hued bell-like flower
Of fragrant trailers, when the air

Sleepeth over all the heaven,
And the crag that fronts the Even,
All along the shadowing shore,
Crimsons over an inland mere,
Eleänore!

4.

How may full-sailed verse express,
How may measured words adore
The full-flowing harmony
Of thy swan-like stateliness,
Eleänore?
The luxuriant symmetry
Of thy floating gracefulness,
Eleänore?
Every turn and glance of thine,
Every lineament divine,
Eleänore,
And the steady sunset glow,
That stays upon thee? For in thee
Is nothing sudden, nothing single;
Like two streams of incense free
From one censer, in one shrine,
Thought and motion mingle,
Mingle ever. Motions flow
To one another, even as though
They were modulated so
To an unheard melody,
Which lives about thee, and a sweep
Of richest pauses, evermore
Drawn from each other mellow-deep;
Who may express thee, Eleänore?

5.

I stand before thee, Eleänore;
I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
Daily and hourly, more and more.
I muse, as in a trance, the while
Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,
Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.
I muse, as in a trance, whene'er
The languors of thy love-deep eyes
Float on to me. I would I were
So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,
To stand apart, and to adore,
Gazing on thee for evermore,
Serene, imperial Eleänore!

6.

Sometimes, with most intensity
Gazing, I seem to see
Thought folded over thought, smiling asleep,
Slowly awakened, grow so full and deep
In thy large eyes, that, overpowered quite,
I can not veil, or droop my sight,
But am as nothing in its light:
As though a star, in inmost heaven set,
Even while we gaze on it,
Should slowly round his orb, and slowly grow
To a full face, there like a sun remain
Fixed—then as slowly fade again,
And draw itself to what it was before;
So full, so deep, so slow,
Thought seems to come and go
In thy large eyes, imperial Eleänore.

7.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,
Roofed the world with doubt and fear,
Floating through an evening atmosphere,
Grow golden all about the sky;
In thee all passion becomes passionless,
Touched by thy spirit's mellowness,
Losing his fire and active might
In a silent meditation,
Falling into a still delight,
And luxury of contemplation:
As waves that up a quiet cove
Rolling slide, and lying still
Shadow forth the banks at will:
Or sometimes they swell and move,
Pressing up against the land,
With motions of the outer sea:
And the self-same influence
Controlleth all the soul and sense
Of Passion gazing upon thee.
His bow-string slackened, languid Love,
Leaning his cheek upon his hand,
Droops both his wings, regarding thee,
And so would languish evermore,
Serene, imperial Eleänore.

8.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses unconfined,
While the amorous, odorous wind
Breathes low between the sunset and the moon;
Or, in a shadowy saloon,
On silken cushions half reclined;

I watch thy grace; and in its place
My heart a charmèd slumber keeps,
While I muse upon thy face;
And a languid fire creeps
Through my veins to all my frame,
Dissolvingly and slowly: soon
From thy rose-red lips MY name
Floweth; and then, as in a swoon,
With dinning sound my ears are rife,
My tremulous tongue faltereth,
I lose my color, I lose my breath,
I drink the cup of a costly death,
Brimmed with delirious draughts of warmest life.
I die with my delight, before
I hear what I would hear from thee;
Yet tell my name again to me,
I *would* be dying evermore,
So dying ever, Eleänore.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

IT is the Miller's Daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles at her ear:
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty, dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest:

And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom,
With her laughter or her sighs,
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasped at night.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER.

THIS morning is the morning of the day,
When I and Eustace from the city went
To see the Gardener's Daughter; I and he,
Brothers in Art; a friendship so complete
Portioned in halves between us, that we grew
The fable of the city where we dwelt.

* * * * * * *

Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
News from the humming city comes to it
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear
The windy clanging of the minster clock;
Although between it and the garden lies
A league of grass, washed by a slow broad stream,
That, stirred with languid pulses of the oar,
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crowned with the minster towers.

The fields between
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-uddered kine,
And all about the large lime-feathers low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous wings.
In that still place she, hoarded in herself,
Grew, seldom seen: not less among us lived
Her fame from lip to lip. Who had not heard
Of Rose, the Gardener's Daughter? Where was he,
So blunt in memory, so old at heart,
At such a distance from his youth in grief,
That, having seen, forgot? The common mouth,
So gross to express delight, in praise of her
Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
And Beauty such a mistress of the world.
And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,
Would play with flying forms and images,
Yet this is also true, that, long before
I looked upon her, when I heard her name
My heart was like a prophet to my heart,
And told me I should love. A crowd of hopes
That sought to sow themselves like wingèd seeds,
Born out of everything I heard and saw,
Fluttered about my senses and my soul;
And vague desires, like fitful blasts of balm
To one that travels quickly, made the air
Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,
That verged upon them, sweeter than the dream
Dreamed by a happy man, when the dark East,
Unseen, is brightening to his bridal morn.
And sure this orbit of the memory folds
Forever in itself the day we went
To see her. All the land in flowery squares,

Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,
Smelt of the coming summer, as one large cloud
Drew downward: but all else of heaven was pure
Up to the sun, and May from verge to verge,
And May with me from head to heel. And now,
As though 'twere yesterday, as though it were
The hour just flown, that morn with all its sound,
(For those old Mays had thrice the life of these,)
Rings in mine ears.

* * * * * * *

And on we went: but ere an hour had passed,
We reached a meadow slanting to the north;
Down which a well-worn pathway courted us
To one green wicket in a privet-hedge;
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk
Through crowded lilac-ambush trimly pruned;
And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume, blew
Beyond us, as we entered in the cool:
The garden stretches southward. In the midst
A cedar spread his dark-green layers of shade.
The garden-glasses shone, and momently
The twinkling laurel scattered silver lights.
"Eustace," I said, "This wonder keeps the house."
He nodded, but a moment afterward
He cried, "Look! look!" Before he ceased I turned,
And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.
For up the porch there grew an Eastern rose,
That, flowering high, the last night's gale had caught,
And blown across the walk. One arm aloft—
Gowned in pure white, that fitted to the shape—
Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood.

A single stream of all her soft brown hair
Poured on one side: the shadow of the flowers
Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering
Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—
Ah, happy shade—and still went wavering down,
But, ere it touched a foot, that might have danced
The greensward into greener circles, dipt,
And mixed with shadows of the common ground!
But the full day dwelt on her brows, and sunned
Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe-bloom,
And doubled his own warmth against her lips,
And on the bounteous wave of such a breast
As never pencil drew. Half light, half shade,
She stood, a sight to make an old man young.
So rapt, we neared the house; but she, a Rose
In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,
Nor heard us come, nor from her tendance turned
Into the world without; till close at hand,
And almost ere I knew mine own intent,
This murmur broke the stillness of that air
Which brooded round about her:
"Ah, one rose,
One rose, but one, by those fair fingers culled,
Were worth a hundred kisses pressed on lips
Less exquisite than thine."
She looked; but all
Suffused with blushes—neither self-possessed
Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and that
Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,
And dropt the branch she held, and turning, wound
Her looser hair in braid, and stirred her lips
For some sweet answer, though no answer came,

Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,
And moved away, and left me, statue-like,
In act to render thanks.

* * * * * * *

So home I went, but could not sleep for joy,
Reading her perfect features in the gloom,
Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and o'er,
And shaping faithful record of the glance
That graced the giving—such a noise of life
Swarmed in the golden present, such a voice
Called to me from the years to come, and such
A length of bright horizon rimmed the dark.
And all that night I heard the watchmen peal
The sliding season: all that night I heard
The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy hours.
The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,
O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,
Distilling odors on me as they went
To greet their fairer sisters of the East.

Love at first sight, first-born, and heir to all,
Made this night thus. Henceforward squall nor storm
Could keep me from that Eden where she dwelt.
Light pretexts drew me: sometimes a Dutch love
For tulips; then for roses, moss or musk,
To grace my city-rooms; or fruits and cream
Served in the weeping elm; and more and more
A word would bring the color to my cheek;
A thought would fill my eyes with happy dew;
Love trebled life within me, and with each
The year increased.

The daughters of the year,
One after one, through that still garden passed;

Each garlanded with her peculiar flower
Danced into light, and died into the shade;
And each in passing touched with some new grace
Or seemed to touch her, so that day by day,
Like one that never can be wholly known,
Her beauty grew; till Autumn brought an hour
For Eustace, when I heard his deep "I will,"
Breathed, like the covenant of a God, to hold
From thence through all the worlds: but I rose up
Full of his bliss, and following her dark eyes
Felt earth as air beneath me, till I reached
The wicket-gate, and found her standing there.
  There sat we down upon a garden mound,
Two mutually infolded; Love, the third,
Between us, in the circle of his arms
Enwound us both; and over many a range
Of waning lime the gray cathedral towers,
Across a hazy glimmer of the west,
Revealed their shining windows: from them clashed
The bells; we listened; with the tune we played;
We spoke of other things; we coursed about
The subject most at heart, more near and near,
Like doves about a dovecote, wheeling round
The central wish, until we settled there.
  Then, in that time and place, I spoke to her,
Requiring, though I knew it was mine own,
Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved;
And in that time and place she answered me,
And in the compass of three little words,
More musical than ever came in one,

The silver fragments of a broken voice,
Made me most happy, faltering "I am thine."

MAUD.

1.

A VOICE by the cedar-tree,
In the meadow under the Hall!
She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call!
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.

2.

Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honor that can not die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean,
And myself so languid and base.

3.

Silence, beautiful voice!
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I can not rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.

Still! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

* * * * * * *

1.

I have led her home, my love, my only friend,
There is none like her, none.
And never yet so warmly ran my blood
And sweetly, on and on
Calming itself to the long wished for end,
Full to the banks, close on the promised good.

2.

None like her, none.
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk
Seemed her light foot along the garden walk,
And shook my heart to think she comes once more:
But even then I heard her close the door,
The gates of heaven are closed, and she is gone.

3.

There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have deceased.
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious East,
Sighing for Lebanon,
Dark cedar, though thy limbs have here increased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
And looking to the South, and fed

With honeyed rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame;
And over whom thy darkness must have spread
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limbed Eve from whom she came?

4.

Here will I lie, while these long branches sway,
And you fair stars that crown a happy day
Go in and out as if at merry play,
Who am no more so all forlorn,
As when it seemed far better to be born
To labor and the mattock-hardened hand,
Than nursed at ease and brought to understand
A sad astrology, the boundless plan
That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand
His nothingness into man.

5.

But now shine on, and what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
The countercharm of space and hollow sky,
And do accept my madness, and would die
To save from some slight shame one simple girl.

6.

Would die; for sullen-seeming Death may give
More life to Love than is or ever was

In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to pass;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

7.

Not die; but live a life of truest breath,
And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.
O, why should Love, like men in drinking-songs,
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of death?
Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long lover's kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this?
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself more dear."

8.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay?
And hark the clock within, the silver knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white,
And died to live, long as my pulses play;
But now by this my love has closed her sight
And given false Death her hand, and stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell
Among the fragments of the golden day.
May nothing there her maiden grace affright!
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart and ownest own farewell;
It is but for a little space I go,

And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night!
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow
Of your soft splendors that you look so bright?
I have climbed nearer out of lonely Hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so:
Let all be well, be well.

ROSALIND.

1.

MY Rosalind, my Rosalind,
My frolic falcon, with bright eyes,
Whose free delight, from any height of rapid flight,
Stoops at all game that wing the skies,
My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
My bright-eyed, wild-eyed falcon, whither,
Careless both of wind and weather,
Whither fly ye, what game spy ye,
Up or down the streaming wind?

2.

The quick lark's closest-caroled strains,
The shadow rushing up the sea,
The lightning flash atween the rains,
The sunlight driving down the lea,
The leaping stream, the very wind,
That will not stay, upon his way,
To stoop the cowslip to the plains,

Is not so clear and bold and free
As you, my falcon Rosalind.
You care not for another's pains,
Because you are the soul of joy,
Bright metal all without alloy.
Life shoots and glances through your veins,
And flashes off a thousand ways
Through lips and eyes in subtle rays.
Your hawk-eyes are keen and bright,
Keen with triumph, watching still
To pierce me through with pointed light;
But oftentimes they flash and glitter
Like sunshine on a dancing rill,
And your words are seeming-bitter,
Sharp and few, but seeming-bitter
From excess of swift delight.

3.

Come down, come home, my Rosalind,
My gay young hawk, my Rosalind:
Too long you keep the upper skies;
Too long you roam and wheel at will;
But we must hood your random eyes,
That care not whom they kill,
And your cheek, whose brilliant hue
Is so sparkling-fresh to view,
Some red heath-flower in the dew,
Touched with sunrise. We must bind
And keep you fast, my Rosalind,
Fast, fast, my wild-eyed Rosalind,
And clip your wings, and make you love;
When we have lured you from above,

And that delight of frolic flight, by day or night,
From north to south;
Will bind you fast in silken cords,
And kiss away the bitter words
From off your rosy mouth.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,
"*The Legend of Good Women*," long ago
Sung by the morning star of song, who made
His music heard below;

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts, that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his art
Held me above the subject, as strong gales
Hold swollen clouds from raining, though my heart,
Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In every land
I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and Anguish walking hand in hand
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renownèd brides of ancient song
Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars,
And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars;

And clattering flints battered with clanging hoofs:
And I saw crowds in columned sanctuaries;
And forms that passed at windows and on roofs
Of marble palaces;

Corpses across the threshold; heroes tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall;
Lances in ambush set;

And high shrine-doors burst through with heated blasts
That run before the fluttering tongues of fire;
White surf wind-scattered over sails and masts,
And ever climbing higher;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates,
Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,
Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,
And hushed seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when to land
Bluster the winds and tides the self-same way,
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,
Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seemed to start in pain,
Resolved on noble things, and strove to speak,
As when a great thought strikes along the brain,
And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,
That bore a lady from a leaguered town;
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing thought
Streamed onward, lost their edges, and did creep
Rolled on each other, rounded, smoothed, and brought
Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wandered far
In an old wood: fresh-washed in coolest dew,
The maiden splendors of the morning star
Shook in the steadfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree boles did stoop and lean
Upon the dusky brushwood underneath
Their broad curved branches, fledged with clearest green,
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey done,
And with dead lips smiled at the twilight plain;
Half-fallen across the threshold of the sun,
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,
Not any song of bird or sound of rill;
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine turned
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,
And at the root through lush green grasses burned
The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I knew
The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks drenched in dew,
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Poured back into my empty soul and frame
The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone
Thrilled through mine ears in that unblissful clime,
"Pass freely through: the wood is all thine own,
Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,
Stiller than chiseled marble, standing there;
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise
Froze my swift speech: she turning on my face
The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
Spoke slowly in her place.

"I had great beauty: ask thou not my name:
No one can be more wise than destiny.
Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came
I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair field
Myself for such a face had boldly died,"
I answered free; and turning I appealed
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,
To her full height her stately stature draws;
"My youth," she said, "was blasted with a curse:
This woman was the cause.

"I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears:
My father held his hand upon his face;
I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak: my voice was thick with sighs
As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes,
Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flickered as they lay afloat;
The crowds, the temples, wavered, and the shore;
The bright death quivered at the victim's throat;
Touched; and I knew no more."

Whereto the other with a downward brow:
"I would the white cold heavy-plunging foam,
Whirled by the wind, had rolled me deep below,
Then when I left my home."

Her slow full words sank through the silence drear,
As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea:
Sudden I heard a voice that cried, "Come here,
That I may look on thee."

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
One sitting on a crimson scarf unrolled;
A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,
Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began:
"I governed men by change, and so I swayed
All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen a man.
Once, like the moon, I made

"The ever-shifting currents of the blood
According to my humor ebb and flow.
I have no men to govern in this wood:
That makes my only woe.

"Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not bend
One will; nor tame and tutor with mine eye
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee, friend,
Where is Mark Antony?

"The man, my lover, with whom I rode sublime
On Fortune's neck: we sat as God by God:
The Nilus would have risen before his time
And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan sun to sleep, and lit
Lamps which outburned Canopus. O my life
In Egypt! O the dalliance and the wit,
The flattery and the strife,

"And the wild kiss, when fresh from war's alarms,
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,
My mailèd Bacchus leapt into my arms,
Contented there to die!

"And there he died: and when I heard my name
Sighed forth with life, I would not brook my fear
Of the other: with a worm I balked his fame.
What else was left? look here!"

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half
The polished argent of her breast to sight
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a laugh,
Showing the aspic's bite.)

"I died a queen. The Roman soldier found
Me lying dead, my crown about my brows,
A name forever!—lying robed and crowned,
Worthy a Roman spouse."

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range
Struck by all passions, did fall down and glance
From tone to tone, and glided through all change
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for delight;
Because with sudden motion from the ground
She raised her piercing orbs, and filled with light
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest darts;
As once they drew into two burning rings
All beams of Love, melting the mighty hearts
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard
A noise of some one coming through the lawn,
And singing clearer than the crested bird,
That claps his wings at dawn.

"The torrent brooks of hallowed Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late and soon,
Sound all night long, in falling through the dell,
Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The balmy moon of blessèd Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with beams divine:
All night the splintered crags that wall the dell
With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sunshine laves
The lawn by some cathedral, through the door
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charmed and tied
To where he stands,—so stood I, when that flow
Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure; as when she went along
From Mizpeh's towered gate with welcome light,
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth: "Heaven heads the count of crimes
With that wild oath." She rendered answer high:
"Not so, nor once alone; a thousand times
I would be born and die.

"Single I grew, like some green plant, whose root
Creeps to the garden water-pipes beneath,
Feeding the flower; but ere my flower to fruit
Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father,—these did move
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature gave,
Lowered softly with a threefold cord of love
Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair Hebrew boy
Shall smile away my maiden blame among
The Hebrew mothers'—emptied of all joy,
Leaving the dance and song,

"Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
Leaving the promise of my bridal bower,
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that glow
Beneath the battled tower.

"The light white cloud swam over us. Anon
We heard the lion roaring from his den;
We saw the large white stars rise one by one,
Or, from the darkened glen,

"Saw God divide the night with flying flame,
And thunder on the everlasting hills.
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief became
A solemn scorn of ills.

"When the next moon was rolled into the sky,
Strength came to me that equaled my desire.
How beautiful a thing it was to die
For God and for my sire!

"It comforts me in this one thought to dwell,
That I subdued me to my father's will;
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
Sweetens the spirit still.

"Moreover, it is written that my race
Hewed Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth." Here her face
Glowed, as I looked at her.

She locked her lips: she left me where I stood:
"Glory to God," she sang, and past afar,
Thridding the somber boskage of the wood,
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,
As one that from a casement leans his head,
When midnight bells cease ringing suddenly,
And the old year is dead.

"Alas! alas!" a low voice, full of care,
Murmured beside me: "Turn and look on me:
I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,
If what I was I be.

"Would I had been some maiden coarse and poor!
O me, that I should ever see the light!
Those dragon-eyes of angered Eleanor
Do hunt me, day and night."

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and trust:
To whom the Egyptian: "O, you tamely died!
You should have clung to Fulvia's waist, and thrust
The dagger through her side."

With that sharp sound the white dawn's creeping beams,
Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery
Of folded sleep. The captain of my dreams
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broadened on the borders of the dark,
Ere I saw her, who clasped in her last trance
Her murdered father's head, or Joan of Arc,
A light of ancient France;

Or her, who knew that Love can vanquish Death,
Who kneeling, with one arm about her king,
Drew forth the poison with her balmy breath,
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labors longer from the deep
Gold-mines of thought to lift the hidden ore
That glimpses, moving up, than I from sleep
To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what dull pain
Compassed, how eagerly I sought to strike
Into that wondrous track of dreams again!
But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath been blest,
Desiring what is mingled with past years,
In yearnings that can never be exprest
By signs or groans or tears;

Because all words, though culled with choicest art,
Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
Faints, faded by its heat.

FOURTH
EVENING

FOURTH EVENING.

Which is devoted to Selections from Moore, Burns, and other Scotch and Irish Poets; and no Bards of any Land have written Love-Verses of Choicer Savor.

THE BIRTH OF PORTRAITURE.

SONG FROM "EVENINGS IN GREECE," BY THOMAS MOORE.

AS once a Grecian maiden wove
Her garland mid the summer bowers,
There stood a youth, with eyes of love,
To watch her while she wreathed the flowers.
The youth was skilled in Painting's art,
But ne'er had studied woman's brow,
Nor knew what magic hues the heart
Can shed o'er Nature's charms, till now.

Chorus.

Blest be Love, to whom we owe
All that's fair and bright below.

His hand had pictured many a rose,
And sketched the rays that light the brook;
But what were these, or what were those,
To woman's blush, to woman's look?

"Oh, if such magic power there be,
This, this," he cried, "is all my prayer,
To paint that living light I see,
And fix the soul that sparkles there."

His prayer, as soon as breathed, was heard;
His pallet, touched by love, grew warm,
And Painting saw her hues transferred
From lifeless flowers to woman's form.
Still as from tint to tint he stole,
The fair design shone out the more,
And there was now a life, a soul,
Where only colors glowed before.

Then first carnations learned to speak,
And lilies unto life were brought;
While, mantling on the maiden's cheek,
Young roses kindled into thought.
Then hyacinths their darkest dyes
Upon the locks of Beauty threw;
And violets, transformed to eyes,
Inshrined a soul within their blue.

Chorus.

Blest be Love, to whom we owe
All that's fair and bright below.
Song was cold and Painting dim
Till Song and Painting learned from him.

LESBIA HATH A BEAMING EYE.

BY THOMAS MOORE.

LESBIA hath a beaming eye,
But no one knows for whom it beameth;

Right and left its arrows fly,
  But what they aim at no one dreameth!
Sweeter 'tis to gaze upon
  My Nora's lid, that seldom rises;
Few its looks, but every one,
  Like unexpected light, surprises!
    O my Nora Creina, dear!
  My gentle, bashful Nora Creina!
      Beauty lies
      In many eyes,
  But love in yours, my Nora Creina!

Lesbia wears a robe of gold,
  But all so close the nymph hath laced it,
Not a charm of beauty's mold
  Presumes to stay where Nature placed it!
Oh! my Nora's gown for me,
  That floats as wild as mountain breezes,
Leaving every beauty free
  To sink or swell, as Heaven pleases!
    Yes, my Nora Creina!
  My simple, graceful Nora Creina!
      Nature's dress
      Is loveliness—
  The dress *you* wear, my Nora Creina!

Lesbia hath a wit refined,
  But when its points are gleaming round us,
Who can tell if they're designed
  To dazzle merely, or to wound us?
Pillowed on my Nora's heart,
  In safer slumber Love reposes—
Bed of peace! whose roughest part

Is but the crumpling of the roses.
O my Nora Creina, dear!
My mild, my artless, Nora Creina!
Wit, though bright,
Hath not the light
That warms your eyes, my Nora Creina!

BLACK AND BLUE EYES.

BY THOMAS MOORE.

THE brilliant black eye
May in triumph let fly
All its darts, without caring who feels 'em;
But the soft eye of blue,
Though it scatter wounds too,
Is much better pleased when it heals 'em!
Dear Fanny!
The soft eye of blue,
Though it scatter wounds too,
Is much better pleased when it heals 'em.

The black eye may say,
"Come and worship my ray—
By adoring, perhaps, you may move me!"
But the blue eye, half hid,
Says, from under its lid—
"I love, and am yours, if you love me!"
Dear Fanny!
The blue eye, half hid,
Says, from under its lid—
"I love, and am yours, if you love me!"

Then tell me, oh, why,
In that lovely blue eye,
Not a charm of its tint I discover;
Or why should you wear
The only blue pair
That ever said "No" to a lover?
Dear Fanny!
Oh, why should you wear
The only blue pair
That ever said "No" to a lover?

TO NEA.

BY THOMAS MOORE.

(*Written at Bermuda.*)

IF I were yonder wave, my dear,
And thou the isle it clasps around,
I would not let a foot come near
My land of bliss, my fairy ground!

If I were yonder conch of gold,
And thou the pearl within it placed,
I would not let an eye behold
The sacred gem my arms embraced!

If I were yonder orange-tree,
And thou the blossom blooming there,
I would not yield a breath of thee,
To scent the most imploring air!

Oh! bend not o'er the water's brink,
Give not the wave that rosy sigh,

Nor let its burning mirror drink
The soft reflection of thine eye.

That glossy hair, that glowing cheek,
Upon the billows pour their beam
So warmly, that my soul could seek
Its Nea in the painted stream.

Behold the leafy mangrove, bending
O'er the waters blue and bright,
Like Nea's silky lashes, lending
Shadow to her eyes of light!

O my beloved! where'er I turn,
Some trace of thee enchants mine eyes,
In every star thy glances burn,
Thy blush on every floweret lies.

I pray thee, on those lips of thine
To wear this rosy leaf for me,
And breathe of something not divine,
Since nothing human breathes of thee!

All other charms of thine I meet
In nature, but thy sigh alone;
Then take, oh! take, though not so sweet,
The breath of roses for thine own!

So, while I walk the flowery grove,
The bud that gives, through morning dew,
The luster of the lips I love,
May seem to give their perfume too!

OH, ONCE I LOVED À BONNIE LASS.

BY ROBERT BURNS.

(*This was the first poem written by Burns. It was composed in his sixteenth year, and addressed to a daughter of the village blacksmith. In a letter to his friend Dr. Moore, the poet has given an account of his acquaintance with this girl, and how he came to write the verses, which may with propriety be copied here. "You know," Burns wrote, "our country custom of coupling a man and a woman together as partners in the labors of harvest. In my fifteenth autumn, my partner was a bewitching creature, a year younger than myself. My scarcity of English denies me the power of doing her justice in that language, but you know the Scottish idiom—she was a bonnie, sweet, sonsie lass. In short, she, altogether unwittingly to herself, initiated me into that delicious passion which, in spite of acid disappointment, gin-horse prudence, and book-worm philosophy, I hold to be the first of human joys, our dearest blessing here below! How she caught the contagion, I can not tell; you medical people talk much of infection from breathing the same air, the touch, etc., but I never expressly said I loved her. Indeed, I did not know myself why I liked so much to loiter behind with her, when returning in the evening from our labors; why the tones of her voice made my heart-strings thrill like an Æolian harp; and particularly why my pulse beat such a furious rattan when I looked and fingered over her little hand to pick out the cruel nettle-stings and thistles. Among her other love-inspiring qualities, she sung sweetly; and it was her favorite reel to which I attempted giving an embodied vehicle in rhyme. I was not so presumptuous as to imagine that I could make verses like printed ones, composed by men who had Greek and Latin; but my girl sung a song which was said to be composed by a small country laird's son, on one of his father's maids, with whom he was in love, and I saw no reason why I might not rhyme as well as he. . . . Thus with me began love and poetry.")*

OH, once I loved a bonnie lass,
Ay, and I love her still;
And whilst that honor warms my breast,
I'll love my handsome Nell.

As bonnie lasses I hae seen,
And mony full as braw,
But for a modest, gracefu' mien,
The like I never saw.

A bonnie lass, I will confess,
Is pleasant to the ee,
But without some better qualities
She's no a lass for me.

But Nelly's looks are blythe and sweet,
And, what is best of a',
Her reputation is complete,
And fair without a flaw.

She dresses ay sae clean and neat,
Both decent and genteel:
And then there's something in her gait
Gars ony dress look weel.

A gaudy dress and gentle air
May slightly touch the heart,
But it's innocence and modesty
That polishes the dart:

'Tis this in Nelly pleases me,
'Tis this enchants my soul;
For absolutely in my breast
She reigns without control.

MY NANNIE, O.

BY ROBERT BURNS.

BEHIND yon hills where Lugar flows,
'Mang moors and mosses many, O,
The wintry sun the day has closed,
And I'll awa to Nannie, O.

The westlin' wind blaws loud an' shrill;
The night's baith mirk and rainy, O;
But I'll get my plaid, an' out I'll steal,
An' owre the hills to Nannie, O.

My Nannie's charming, sweet, an' young;
Nae artfu' wiles to win ye, O;
May ill befa' the flattering tongue
That wad beguile my Nannie, O.
Her face is fair, her heart is true,
As spotless as she's bonnie, O;
The opening gowan, wet wi' dew,
Nae purer is than Nannie, O.

A country lad is my degree,
An' few there be that ken me, O;
But what care I how few they be,
I'm welcome aye to Nannie, O.
My riches a' 's my penny-fee,
An' I maun guide it cannie, O;
But warl's gear ne'er troubles me,
My thoughts are a' my Nannie, O.

Our auld gudeman delights to view
His sheep an' kye thrive bonnie, O;
But I'm as blythe that hauds his pleugh,
An' has nae care but Nannie, O.
Come weel, come woe, I care nae by,
I'll tak what Heaven will send me, O;
Nae ither care in life hae I,
But live, an' love my Nannie, O.

JESSIE.

BY ROBERT BURNS.

TRUE-HEARTED was he, the sad swain o' the Yarrow,
And fair are the maids on the banks o' the Ayr,
But by the sweet side o' the Nith's winding river,
Are lovers as faithful, and maidens as fair:
To equal young Jessie seek Scotland all over;
To equal young Jessie you seek it in vain;
Grace, beauty, and elegance fetter her lover,
And maidenly modesty fixes the chain.

Oh fresh is the rose in the gay, dewy morning,
And sweet is the lily at evening close;
But in the fair presence o' lovely young Jessie,
Unseen is the lily, unheeded the rose.
Love sits in her smile, a wizard insnaring;
Enthroned in her e'en he delivers his law;
And still to her charms she alone is a stranger!
Her modest demeanor's the jewel of a'.

BONNIE LESLEY.

BY ROBERT BURNS.

O SAW ye bonnie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the border?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her forever;
For nature made her what she is,
And ne'er made sic anither!

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee;
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The deil he could na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee."

The powers aboon will tent thee;
Misfortune sha' na steer thee;
Thou'rt like themselves sae lovely
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie!
That we may brag, we hae a lass
There's nane again sae bonnie.

THE LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE.

BY ROBERT BURNS.

'TWAS even—the dewy fields were green,
On every blade the pearls did hang;
The zephyr wantoned round the bean
And bore its fragrant sweets alang;
In ev'ry glen the mavis sang,
All nature listening seemed the while,
Except where green-wood echoes rang
Amang the braes o' Ballochmyle.

With careless step I onward strayed;
My heart rejoiced in nature's joy;

When musing in a lonely glade,
A maiden fair I chanced to spy.
Her look was like the morning's eye,
Her air like nature's vernal smile;
Perfection whispered, passing by,
Behold the lass o' Ballochmyle!

Fair is the morn in flow'ry May,
And sweet is night in autumn mild,
When roving through the garden gay,
Or wand'ring in a lonely wild;
But woman, Nature's darling child!
There all her charm she does compile;
Ev'n there her other works are foiled
By the bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

Oh, had she been a country maid,
And I the happy country swain,
Though sheltered in the lowest shed
That ever rose in Scotland's plain,
Through weary winter's wind and rain
With joy, with rapture, I would toil,
And nightly to my bosom strain
The bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

Then pride might climb the slipp'ry steep
Where fame and honors lofty shine;
And thirst of gold might tempt the deep,
Or downward seek the Indian mine.
Give me the cot below the pine,
To tend the flocks, or till the soil,
And every day have joys divine
With the bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

HIGHLAND MARY.

BY ROBERT BURNS.

YE banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There Simmer first unfaulds her robes,
And there she langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom;
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me, as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow, and locked embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And pledging aft to meet again,
We tore ourselves asunder;
But O! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipped my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!

And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mold'ring now in silent dust
That heart that loved me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

ANNIE LAURIE.

BY DOUGLAS OF FINGLAND.

MAXWELTON braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true;
Gie'd me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw drift;
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on—
That e'er the sun shone on—
And dark blue is her ee;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet;
Like the winds in summer sighing,
Her voice is low and sweet—

Her voice is low and sweet—
And she's a' the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

MY BLYTHE AN' BONNY LASSIE.

BY JAMES HOGG.

HOW sair my heart nae man shall ken
When I took leave o' yonder glen,
Her faithful dames, her honest men,
Her streams sae pure an' glassy, O;
Her woods that skirt the verdant vale,
Her balmy breeze sae brisk an' hale,
Her flower of every flower the wale,
My blythe an' bonny lassie, O!

The night was short, the day was lang,
An' ay we sat the birks amang,
'Til o'er my head the blackbird sang
Gae part wi' that dear lassie, O.
When on Lamgaro's top sae green
The rising sun-beam red was seen,
Wi' aching heart I left my Jean,
My blythe an' bonny lassie, O.

Her form is gracefu' as the pine;
Her smile the sunshine after rain;
Her nature cheerfu', frank, an' kind,
An' neither proud nor saucy, O.
The ripest cherry on the tree
Was ne'er sae pure or meek to see,

Nor half sae sweet its juice to me,
As a kiss o' my dear lassie, O.

Whate'er I do, whate'er I be,
Yon glen shall ay be dear to me;
Her banks and howms sae fair to see;
Her braes sae green an' grassy, O:
For there my hopes are centred a';
An' there my heart was stol'n awa';
An' there my Jeanie first I saw,
My blythe an' bonny lassie, O.

WHEN MAGGY GANGS AWAY.

BY JAMES HOGG.

OH, what will a' the lads do
When Maggy gangs away?
Oh, what will a' the lads do
When Maggy gangs away?
There's no a heart in a' the glen
That disna dread the day!
Oh, what will a' the lads do
When Maggy gangs away?

Young Jock has ta'en the hill for't,
A waefu' wight is he;
Poor Harry's ta'en the bed for't
An' laid him down to dee;
An' Sandy's gane unto the kirk
An' learnin' fast to pray:
And oh, what will the lads do
When Maggy gangs away?

The young laird o' the Lang-Shaw
  Has drunk her health in wine;
The priest has said—in confidence—
  The lassie was divine,
And that is mair in maiden's praise
  Than ony priest should say:
But oh, what will the lads do
  When Maggy gangs away?

The wailing in our green glen
  That day will quaver high;
'Twill draw the red hart frae the woods,
  The laverock frae the sky;
The fairies frae the beds o' dew
  Will rise and join the lay:
An' hey! what a day 'twill be,
  When Maggy gangs away!

THE LASS OF GLENESLAN-MILL.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

THE laverock loves the dewy light,
  The bee the balmy foxglove fair;
The shepherd loves the glowing morn,
  When song and sunshine fill the air:
But I love best the summer moon,
  With all her stars, pure streaming still;
For then, in light and love I meet
  The sweet lass of Gleneslan-mill.

The violets lay their blossoms low,
  Beneath her white foot, on the plain;

Their fragrant heads the lilies wave,
  Of her superior presence fain.
O might I clasp her to my heart,
  And of her ripe lips have my will!
For loath to woo, and long to win,
  Was she by green Gleneslan-mill.

Mute was the wind, soft fell the dew,
  O'er Blackwood brow bright glowed the moon;
Rills murmured music, and the stars
  Refused to set our heads aboon:
Ye might have heard our beating hearts,
  Our mixing breaths—all was so still,
Till morning's light shone on her locks—
  Farewell, lass of Gleneslan-mill.

Wert thou an idol all of gold,
  Had I the eye of worldish care,
I could not think thee half so sweet,
  Look on thee so, or love thee mair.
Till death's cold dew-drop dim mine eye,
  This tongue be mute, this heart lie still—
Thine every wish of joy and love,
  My lass of green Gleneslan-mill!

THERE LIVES A YOUNG LASSIE.

BY JOHN IMLAH.

THERE lives a young lassie
  Far down yon lang glen;
How I lo'e that lassie
  There's nae ane can ken!

O, a saint's faith may vary,
But faithful I'll be;
For well I lo'e Mary,
And Mary lo'es me.

Red, red as the rowan
Her smiling wee mou';
And white as the gowan
Her breast and her brow!
Wi' a foot o' a fairy
She links o'er the lea:
O! well I lo'e Mary,
And Mary lo'es me.

THE NAMELESS LASSIE.

BY JAMES BALLANTYNE.

THERE'S nane may ever guess or trow my bonnie lassie's name,
There's nane may ken the humble cot my lassie ca's her hame;
Yet though my lassie's nameless, an' her kin o' low degree,
Her heart is warm, her thochts are pure, and oh! she's dear to me.

She's gentle and she's bonnie, an' she's modest as she's fair,
Her virtues, like her beauties a', are varied as they're rare;
While she is light an' merry as the lammie on the lea—
For happiness an' innocence thegether aye maun be!

Whene'er she shows her blooming face, the flowers may cease to blaw,
An' when she opes her hinnied lips, the air is music a';
But when wi' other's sorrow touched, the tear starts to her ee,
Oh! that's the gem in beauty's crown, the priceless pearl to me.

Within my soul her form's enshrined, her heart is a' my ain,
An' richer prize or purer bliss nae mortal e'er can gain;
The darkest paths o' life I tread wi' steps o' bounding glee,
Cheered onward by the love that lichts my nameless lassie's ee.

MARY DHU.

BY DAVID MACBETH MOIR.

SWEET, sweet is the rose-bud
Bathed in dew;
But sweeter art thou,
My Mary Dhu.
Oh! the skies of night,
With their eyes of light,
Are not so bright
As my Mary Dhu.
Whenever thy radiant face I see,
The clouds of sorrow depart from me:
As the shadows fly
From day's bright eye,
Thou lightest life's sky,
My Mary Dhu.

Sad, sad is my heart,
When I sigh, adieu!
Or gaze on thy parting,
My Mary Dhu!
Then for thee I mourn,
Till thy steps' return
Bids my bosom burn—
My Mary Dhu.
I think but of thee on the broom-clad hills,
I muse but on thee by the moorland rills.

In the morning light,
In the moonshine bright,
Thou art still in my sight,
My Mary Dhu.

Thy voice trembles through me
Like the breeze,
That ruffles, in gladness,
The leafy trees;
'Tis a wafted tone
From Heaven's high throne,
Making hearts thine own,
My Mary Dhu.
Be the flowers of joy ever round thy feet,
With colors glowing, and incense sweet;
And when thou must away,
May life's rose decay
In the west wind's sway—
My Mary Dhu!

JESSIE, THE FLOWER O' DUMBLANE.

BY ROBERT TANNAHILL.

THE sun has gane down o'er the lofty Ben-Lomond,
And left the red clouds to preside o'er the scene,
While lanely I stray in the calm simmer gloamin'
To muse on sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

How sweet is the brier, wi' its saft faulding blossom,
And sweet is the birk, wi' its mantle o' green;
Yet sweeter and fairer, and dear to this bosom,
Is lovely young Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

She's modest as ony, and blythe as she's bonny;
For guileless simplicity marks her its ain;
And far be the villain, divested of feeling,
Wha'd blight, in its bloom, the sweet flower o' Dumblane.

Sing on, thou sweet mavis, thy hymn to the e'ening,
Thou'rt dear to the echoes of Calderwood glen;
Sae dear to this bosom, sae artless and winning,
Is charming young Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

How lost were my days till I met wi' my Jessie,
The sports o' the city seemed foolish and vain;
I ne'er saw a nymph I would ca' my dear lassie,
Till charmed with sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

Though mine were the station o' loftiest grandeur,
Amidst its profusion I'd languish in pain;
And reckon as naething the height o' its splendor,
If wanting sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

THE BANKS OF THE LEE.

BY THOMAS OSBORNE DAVIS.

OH, the banks of the Lee, the banks of the Lee,
And love in a cottage for Mary and me!
There's not in the land a lovelier tide,
And I'm sure that there's no one so fair as my bride.
She's modest and meek,
There's a down on her cheek,
And her skin is as sleek
As a butterfly's wing;
Then her step would scarce show

On the fresh-fallen snow,
And her whisper is low,
But as clear as the spring.
Oh, the banks of the Lee, the banks of the Lee,
And love in a cottage for Mary and me!
I know not how love is happy elsewhere,
I know not how any but lovers are there.

Oh, so green is the grass, so clear is the stream,
So mild is the mist and so rich is the beam,
That beauty should never to other lands roam,
But make on the banks of our river its home!
When, dripping with dew,
The roses peep through,
'Tis to look in at you
They are growing so fast;
While the scent of the flowers
Must be hoarded for hours,
'Tis poured in such showers
When my Mary goes past.
Oh, the banks of the Lee, the banks of the Lee,
And love in a cottage for Mary and me!
Oh, Mary for me, Mary for me,
And 'tis little I'd sigh for the banks of the Lee!

THE PRETTY GIRL OF LOCH DAN.

BY SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

THE shades of eve had crossed the glen
That frowns o'er infant Avonmore,
When, nigh Loch Dan, two weary men,
We stopped before a cottage-door.

"God save all here," my comrade cries,
And rattles on the raised latch-pin;
"God save you kindly," quick replies
A clear sweet voice, and asks us in.

We enter; from the wheel she starts,
A rosy girl with soft black eyes;
Her fluttering court'sy takes our hearts,
Her blushing grace and pleased surprise.

Poor Mary, she was quite alone,
For, all the way to Glenmalure,
Her mother had that morning gone,
And left the house in charge with her.

But neither household cares, nor yet
The shame that startled virgins feel,
Could make the generous girl forget
Her wonted hospitable zeal.

She brought us in a beechen bowl
Sweet milk that smacked of mountain-thyme,
Oat-cake, and such a yellow roll
Of butter—it gilds all my rhyme!

And, while we ate the grateful food
(With weary limbs on bench reclined),
Considerate and discreet, she stood
Apart, and listened to the wind.

Kind wishes both our souls engaged,
From breast to breast spontaneous ran
The mutual thought—we stood and pledged
THE MODEST ROSE ABOVE LOCH DAN.

"The milk we drink is not more pure,
Sweet Mary—bless those budding charms!—
Than your own generous heart, I'm sure,
Nor whiter than the breast it warms!"

She turned and gazed, unused to hear
Such language in that lonely glen;
But, Mary, you have naught to fear,
Though smiled on by two stranger-men.

Not for a crown would I alarm
Your virgin pride by word or sign,
Nor need a painful blush disarm
My friend of thoughts as pure as mine.

Her simple heart could not but feel
The words we spoke were free from guile;
She stooped, she blushed, she fixed her wheel—
'Tis all in vain—she can't but smile!

Just like sweet April's dawn appears
Her modest face—I see it yet—
And though I lived a hundred years,
Methinks I never could forget

The pleasure that, despite her heart,
Fills all her downcast eyes with light,
The lips reluctantly apart,
The white teeth struggling into sight,

The dimples eddying o'er her cheek—
The rosy cheek that won't be still;—
Oh, who could blame what flatterers speak,
Did smiles like this reward their skill?

For such another smile, I vow,
Though loudly beats the midnight rain,
I'd take the mountain-side e'en now,
And walk to Luggelaw again!

KITTY NEIL.

BY JOHN FRANCIS WALLER.

"AH, sweet Kitty Neil! rise up from your wheel—
Your neat little foot will be weary from spinning;
Come, trip down with me to the sycamore-tree;
Half the parish is there, and the dance is beginning.
The sun is gone down; but the full harvest moon
Shines sweetly and cool on the dew-whitened valley;
While all the air rings with the soft, loving things
Each little bird sings in the green shaded alley."

With a blush and a smile Kitty rose up the while,
Her eye in the glass, as she bound her hair, glancing;
'Tis hard to refuse when a young lover sues,
So she couldn't but choose to go off to the dancing.
And now on the green the glad groups are seen—
Each gay-hearted lad with the lass of his choosing;
And Pat, without fail, leads out sweet Kitty Neil—
Somehow, when he asked, she ne'er thought of refusing.

Now Felix Magee puts his pipes to his knee,
And, with flourish so free, sets each couple in motion;
With a cheer and a bound, the lads patter the ground—
The maids move around just like swans on the ocean.
Cheeks bright as the rose—feet light as the doe's—
Now coyly retiring, now boldly advancing;

Search the world all around from the sky to the ground,
No such sight can be found as an Irish lass dancing!

Sweet Kate! who could view your bright eyes of deep blue,
Beaming humidly through their dark lashes so mildly—
Your fair-turnèd arm, heaving breast, rounded form—
Nor feel his heart warm, and his pulses throb wildly?
Poor Pat feels his heart, as he gazes, depart,
Subdued by the smart of such painful yet sweet love;
The sight leaves his eye as he cries with a sigh,
"Dance light, for my heart it lies under your feet, love!"

MOLLY CAREW.

BY SAMUEL LOVER.

OCH hone! and what will I do?
Sure my love is all crost,
Like a bud in the frost:
And there's no use at all in my going to bed,
For 'tis dhrames and not sleep that comes into my head:
And 'tis all about you,
My sweet Molly Carew—
And indeed, 'tis a sin and a shame!
You're complater than nature
In every feature;
The snow can't compare
With your forehead so fair;
And I rather would see just one blink of your eye
Than the prettiest star that shines out of the sky;
And by this and by that,
For the matter o' that,
You're more distant by far than that same!

Och hone! weirasthru!
I'm alone in this world without you.

Och hone! but why should I spake
Of your forehead and eyes,
When your nose it defies
Paddy Blake, the schoolmaster, to put it in rhyme;
Though there's one Burke, he says, that would call it snublime.
And then for your cheek,
Troth 'twould take him a week
Its beauties to tell, as he'd rather;
Then your lips! oh, machree!
In their beautiful glow
They a pattern might be
For the cherries to grow.
'Twas an apple that tempted our mother, we know,
For apples were scarce, I suppose, long ago;
But at this time o' day,
'Pon my conscience I'll say,
Such cherries might tempt a man's father!
Och hone! weirasthru!
I'm alone in this world without you.

Och hone! by the man in the moon,
You taze me all ways
That a woman can plaze,
For you dance twice as high with that thief, Pat Magee,
As when you take share of a jig, dear, with me;
Though the piper I bate,
For fear the old cheat
Wouldn't play you your favorite tune.
And when you're at mass
My devotion you crass,

For 'tis thinking of you
I am, Molly Carew,
While you wear, on purpose, a bonnet so deep
That I can't at your sweet pretty face get a peep.
Oh, lave off that bonnet,
Or else I'll lave on it
The loss of my wandering sowl!
Och hone! weirasthru!
Och hone! like an owl,
Day is night, dear, to me without you!

Och hone! don't provoke me to do it;
For there's girls by the score
That loves me—and more;
And you'd look very quare if some morning you'd meet
My wedding all marching in pride down the street;
Troth, you'd open your eyes,
And you'd die with surprise
To think 'twasn't you was come to it!
And faith, Katty Naile,
And her cow, I go bail,
Would jump if I'd say,
"Katty Naile, name the day";
And though you're fair and fresh as a morning in May,
While she's short and dark like a cold winter's day,
Yet if you don't repent
Before Easter, when Lent
Is over, I'll marry for spite,
Och hone! weirasthru!
And when I die for you,
My ghost will haunt you every night.

LOVELY MARY DONNELLY.

BY WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

O LOVELY Mary Donnelly, it's you I love the best!
If fifty girls were round you, I'd hardly see the rest;
Be what it may the time of day, the place be where it will,
Sweet looks of Mary Donnelly, they bloom before me still.

Her eyes like mountain water that's flowing on a rock,
How clear they are, how dark they are! and they give me many a shock;
Red rowans warm in sunshine, and wetted with a shower,
Could ne'er express the charming lip that has me in its power.

Her nose is straight and handsome, her eyebrows lifted up,
Her chin is very neat and pert, and smooth like a china cup;
Her hair's the brag of Ireland, so weighty and so fine—
It's rolling down upon her neck, and gathered in a twine.

The dance o' last Whit-Monday night exceeded all before—
No pretty girl for miles around was missing from the floor;
But Mary kept the belt of love, and oh! but she was gay;
She danced a jig, she sung a song, and took my heart away!

When she stood up for dancing, her steps were so complete,
The music nearly killed itself, to listen to her feet;
The fiddler mourned his blindness, he heard her so much praised;
But blessed himself he wasn't deaf when once her voice she raised.

And evermore I'm whistling or lilting what you sung;
Your smile is always in my heart, your name beside my tongue.
But you've as many sweethearts as you'd count on both your hands,
And for myself there's not a thumb or little finger stands.

Oh, you're the flower of womankind, in country or in town ;
The higher I exalt you, the lower I'm cast down.
If some great lord should come this way and see your beauty bright,
And you to be his lady, I'd own it was but right.

Oh, might we live together in lofty palace hall,
Where joyful music rises, and where scarlet curtains fall ;
Oh, might we live together in a cottage mean and small,
With sods of grass the only roof, and mud the only wall !

O lovely Mary Donnelly, your beauty's my distress—
It's far too beauteous to be mine, but I'll never wish it less ;
The proudest place would fit your face, and I am poor and low,
But blessings be about you, dear, wherever you may go !

OH! WERE MY LOVE.

BY WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

OH ! were my love a country lass,
That I might see her every day ;
And sit with her on hedgerow grass
Beneath a bough of may ;
And find her cattle when astray,
Or help to drive them to the field,
And linger on our homeward way,
And woo her lips to yield
A twilight kiss before we parted,
Full of love, yet easy-hearted !

Oh ! were my love a cottage maid,
To spin through many a winter night,
Where ingle-corner lends its shade
From fir-wood blazing bright !

Beside her wheel what dear delight
To watch the blushes go and come
With tender words, that took no fright
Beneath the friendly hum;
Or rising smile, or tear-drop swelling,
At a fireside legend's telling!

Oh! were my love a peasant girl,
That never saw the wicked town;
Was never dight with silk or pearl,
But graced a homely gown!
How less than weak were fashion's frown
To vex our unambitious lot;
How rich were love and peace to crown
Our green secluded cot;
Where Age would come serene and shining,
Like an autumn day's declining!

Fifth Evening

FIFTH EVENING.

Wherein shall be found excerpta from Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, German, and sundry other Poets that have devotedly writ of Woman, making a Fragrant Garland of Rare and Diversified Blossoms.

THE PORTRAIT.

FROM THE GREEK OF ANACREON.

THOU, whose soft and rosy hues
Mimic form and soul infuse;
Best of painters! come, portray
The lovely maid that's far away.
Far away, my soul, thou art,
But I've thy beauties all by heart.
Paint her jetty ringlets straying,
Silky twine in tendrils playing;
And, if painting hath the skill
To make the spicy balm distill,
Let every little lock exhale
A sigh of perfume on the gale.
Where her tresses' curly flow
Darkles o'er the brow of snow,
Let her forehead beam to light,
Burnished as the ivory bright.

Let her eyebrows sweetly rise
In jetty arches o'er her eyes,
Gently in a crescent gliding,
Just commingling, just dividing.
But hast thou any sparkles warm
The lightning of her eyes to form?
Let them effuse the azure ray
With which Minerva's glances play,
And give them all that liquid fire
That Venus' languid eyes respire.
O'er her nose and cheek be shed
Flushing white and mellowed red;
Gradual tints, as when there glows
In snowy milk the bashful rose.
Then her lips, so rich in blisses!
Sweet petitioner for kisses!
Then beneath her velvet chin,
Whose dimple shades a love within,
A charm may peep, a hue may beam,
And leave the rest to fancy's dream.
Enough—'tis she; 'tis all I seek;
It glows, it lives, it soon will speak!

Translation of Thomas Moore.

HELEN'S EPITHALAMION.

FROM THE GREEK OF THEOCRITUS.

LIKE as the rising morning shows a grateful lightening,
When sacred night is past and winter now lets loose the spring,
So glittering Helen shined among the maids, lusty and tall.
As is the furrow in a field that far outstretcheth all,

Or in a garden is a cypress-tree, or in a trace
A steed of Thessaly, so she to Sparta was a grace.
No damsel with such works as she her baskets used to fill,
Nor in a diverse colored web a woof of greater skill
Doth cut from off the loom: nor any hath such songs and lays
Unto her dainty harp, in Dian's and Minerva's praise,
As Helen hath, in whose bright eyes all Loves and Graces be.
O fair, O lovely maid, a matron now is made of thee;
But we will every spring unto the leaves in meadows go
To gather garlands sweet, and there, not with a little woe,
Will often think of thee, O Helen, as the sucking lambs
Desire the strouting bags and presence of their tender dams,
We all betimes for thee a wreath of melitoe will knit,
And on a shady plane for thee will safely fasten it.
And all betimes for thee, under a shady plane below,
Out of a silver box the sweetest ointment will bestow;
And letters shall be written in the bark, that men may see
And read, Do humble reverence, for I am Helen's tree.

Translation of Sir Edward Dyer.

FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY.

MELEAGER.

RINGLETS, that with clustering shade
The snow-white brows of Demo braid;
Sandals, that with strict embrace
Heliodora's ankles grace;
Portal of Timarion's bower,
Besprent with many a fragrant shower;
Lovely smiles that lurking lie
In Anticleia's sun-bright eye;

Roses, fresh, in earliest bloom,
That Dorothea's breast perfume—
No more Love's golden quivers hold
Their feathered arrows, as of old;
But every sharp and wingèd dart
Has found a quiver in my heart.

Translation of J. H. Merivale.

THE Graces smiling saw her opening charms,
And claspt Aristo in her lovely arms.
Hence her resistless beauty, matchless sense;
The music of her voice; the eloquence,
That e'en in silence flashes from her face,
All strikes the ravished heart; for all its grace.
List to my vows, sweet maid; or from my view
Far, far away remove. In vain I sue.
For, as no space can check the bolts of Jove,
No distance shields me from the shafts of Love.

FILL high the goblet; fill it up;
With Lesbia's name divine
Thrice uttered crown the sparkling cup,
And sweeten all the wine.
Tie round my brows the rosy wreath,
Which yesterday we wove
With flowers that yet of odors breathe,
In memory of my love.
See how yon rose in tears is drest,
Her lovely form to see
No longer folded on my breast,
As it was wont to be.

Translation of J. H. Merivale.

NOW the white snow-drop decks the mead;
The dew-besprent narcissus blows;
And on the flowery mountain's head
The wildly scattered lily grows.
Each loveliest child of Summer throws
Its fragrance to the sunny hour;
But Lesbia's opening lips disclose
Divine Persuasion's fairer flower.
Meadows, why do ye smile in vain,
In robe of green and garlands gay?
When Lesbia moves along the plain,
She wears a sweeter charm than they.

Translation of J. H. Merivale.

PHILODEMUS.

MY Mopsa is little, my Mopsa is brown,
But her cheek is as smooth as the peach's soft down,
And, for blushing, no rose can come near her;
In short, she has woven such nets round my heart,
That I ne'er from my dear little Mopsa can part,
Unless I can find one that's dearer.

Her voice hath a music that dwells on the ear,
And her eye from its orb gives a daylight so clear
That I'm dazzled whenever I meet her;
Her ringlets, so curly, are Cupid's own net,
And her lips, oh! their sweetness I ne'er shall forget—
Till I light upon lips that are sweeter.

But 'tis not her beauty that charms me alone,
'Tis her mind, 'tis that language whose eloquent tone
From the depths of the grave could revive one;
In short, here I swear, that if death were her doom,

I would instantly join my dead love in the tomb—
Unless I could meet with a live one.

Translation of Thomas Moore.

ASCLEPIADES.

CURL, ye sweet flowers; ye zephyrs, softly breathe,
Nor shake from Helen's door my votive wreath,
Bedewed with grief, your blooming honors keep—
For those, who love, are ever known to weep—
And when beneath my lovely maid appears,
Rain from your purple cups a lover's tears.

Translation of the Rev. Robert Bland.

PAUL THE SILENTIARY.

WE ask no flowers to crown the blushing rose,
Nor glittering gems thy beauteous form to deck;
The pearl, in Persia's precious gulf that glows
Yields to the dazzling whiteness of thy neck.
Gold adds not to the luster of thy hair,
But, vanquished, sheds a fainter radiance there.
The Indian hyacinth's celestial hue
Shrinks from the bright effulgence of thine eye,
The Paphian cestus bathed thy lips in dew,
And gave thy form ambrosial harmony.
My soul would perish in the melting gaze,
But for thine eyes, where hope forever plays.

Translation of the Rev. Robert Bland.

SULPICIA.

FROM THE LATIN OF TIBULLUS.

GREAT god of war! Sulpicia, lovely maid,
To grace your calends is in pomp arrayed.

If beauty warms you, quit th' ethereal height,
E'en Cytherea will indulge the sight;
But while you gaze o'er all her matchless charms,
Beware your hands should meanly drop your arms!
When Cupid would the gods with love surprise,
He lights his torches at her radiant eyes.
A secret grace her every act improves,
And pleasing follows wheresoe'er she moves.
If loose her hair upon her bosom plays,
Unnumbered charms that negligence betrays:
Or if 'tis plaited with a labored care,
Alike the labored plaits become the fair.
Whether rich Tyrian robes her charms invest,
Or all in snowy white the nymph is dressed,
All, all she graces, still supremely fair,
Still charms spectators with a fond despair.
A thousand dresses thus Vertumnus wears,
And beauteous equally in each appears.

The richest tints and deepest Tyrian hue,
To thee, O wondrous maid! are solely due:
To thee th' Arabian husbandman should bring
The spicy product of his Eastern spring;
Whatever gems the swarthy Indians boast,
Their shelly treasures, and their golden coast,
Alone thou merit'st! Come, ye tuneful choir,
And come, bright Phœbus! with thy plausive lyre!
This solemn festival harmonious praise,
No theme so much deserves harmonious lays.

Translation of Dr. Grainger.

BEATRICE.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE.

THOSE curled and flaxen tresses I admire,
Of which, with strings of pearl and scattered flowers,
Hath Love contrived a net for me, his prey
To take me; and I find the lure succeed.
And chief, those beauteous eyes attract my gaze,
Which pass through mine and penetrate the heart
With rays so animating and so bright,
That from the sun itself they seem to flow.
Virtue still growing is in them displayed;
Hence I, who contemplate their charms so rare,
Thus commune with myself amid my sighs:
"Alas! why can not I be placed
Alone, unseen, with her where I would wish;
So that with those fair tresses I might play,
And separate them wave by wave;
And of her beauteous eyes, which shine supreme,
Might form two mirrors for delight of mine?"
I next the fair and lovely mouth survey,
The spacious forehead, and the enamoring look,
The fingers white, the nose correctly straight,
The eyebrow smooth and dark, that penciled seems.
Then wandering thought imagination stirs,
Saying: "Observe the winning grace and joy
Within that delicate and vermeil lip,
Where all that's sweet and zest can give is seen:
Oh, stay, and hear how lovely her discourse,
What tenderness and goodness it reveals,
And how her converse she imparts to all!
Admire how, when she smiles,

All other charms in sweetness are surpassed!"
Thus to expatiate on that mouth my thought
Still spurs me on; for I
Have nothing upon earth I would not give,
Could I from it obtain one unreluctant "Yes."
Then I regard her white and well-turned throat,
So aptly joined to shoulders and to bust;
And little rounded chin with dimples stamped,
In form as true as painter's eye conceives.
My thought, which ever turns its flight to her,
Then says: "With joy contemplate the delight,
To clasp within the arms that lovely neck,
And on the throat a tender seal impress!"

* * * * * * *

Her arms I next observe, spacious and full;
Her hand, white, smooth, and soft as down;
Her fingers, long and delicately thin,
Proud of the ring which one of them enclasps,
And thought then says to me: "If thou wert now
Within those arms, thy life would pleasure know
And share with her, which to describe
In least degree defies my utmost skill.
Observe, that every limb a picture seems;
Exact the size and shape her frame requires,
And colored with angelic hues of pearl:
Grace is in every look;
And indignation, if offense provoke:
Meek, modest, temperate, and calm,
To virtue ever dear,
O'er all her noble manners reigns a charm,
Which universal reverence inspires.
Stately and soft she moves as Juno's bird,

Erect and firmly poised as any crane.
One charm remark, peculiarly hers—
An elegance unmatched, with modesty combined ;
And would you see it, in a living proof,"
Says Thought to me, "attend well to thy mind,
When, with a lady elegant and fair
Harmoniously conjoined, she moves along :
Then as the brilliant stars seem chased away,
By greater brightness of the advancing sun,
So vanish other charms when hers are viewed.
Think, then, how pleasing she must be
Whose loveliness and beauty equal are ;
And beauty past compare in her is found.
Habits of virtue and of loyalty
Alone can please her and her cause can serve :
But in her welfare only place thy hope,"
My song, well mayst thou vouch for true,
That, since the day when first was born
A beauteous lady, none ever pleased like her
Thou celebratest, take her all in all :
For joined in her are found
Personal beauty and a virtuous mind :
Nor aught deficient, but some grains of pity.

Translation of Lyell.

TO LAURA'S EYES.

(Petrarch devotes three canzoni, of which this is one, to Laura's Eyes. These are often referred to in Italy as "The Three Graces.")

FROM THE ITALIAN OF PETRARCH.

LADY, in your bright eyes
Soft glancing round, I mark a holy light,
Pointing the arduous way that heavenward lies ;

And to my practiced sight,
From thence, where Love enthroned, asserts his might,
Visibly, palpably, the soul beams forth.
This is the beacon guides to deeds of worth,
And urges me to seek the glorious goal;
This bids me leave the vulgar throng;
Nor can the human tongue
Tell how those orbs divine o'er all my soul
Exert their sweet control,
Both when hoar winter's frosts around are flung,
And when the Year puts on his youth again,
Jocund, as when this bosom first knew pain.

Oh! if in that high sphere,
From whence the Eternal Ruler of the stars
In this excelling work declared his might,
All be as fair and bright,
Loose me from forth my darksome prison here,
That to so glorious life the passage bars;
Then, in the wonted tumult of my breast,
I hail boon Nature, and the genial day
That gave me being, and a fate so blest,
And her who bade hope beam
Upon my soul; for till then burdensome
Was life itself become;
But now, elate with touch of self-esteem,
High thoughts and sweet within that heart arise,
Of which the warders are those beauteous eyes.

No joy so exquisite
Did Love or fickle Fortune e'er devise,
In partial mood, for favored votaries,

But I would barter it
For one dear glance of those angelic eyes,
Whence springs my peace as from its living root.
O vivid luster! of power absolute
O'er all my being—source of that delight,
By which consumed I sink, a willing prey.
As fades each lesser ray
Before your splendor more intense and bright,
So to my raptured heart,
When your surpassing sweetness you impart,
No other thought of feeling may remain
Where you, with Love himself, despotic reign.

All sweet emotions e'er
By happy lovers felt in every clime,
Together all, may not with mine compare,
When, as from time to time,
I catch from that dark radiance rich and deep
A ray in which, disporting, Love is seen;
And I believe that from my cradled sleep,
By Heaven provided this resource hath been,
'Gainst adverse Fortune, and my nature frail.
Wronged am I by that veil,
And the fair hand which oft the light eclipse,
That all my bliss hath wrought,
And whence the passion struggling on my lips,
Both day and night, to vent the breast o'erfraught,
Still varying as I read her varying thought.

For that (with pain I find)
Not Nature's poor endowments may alone
Render me worthy of a look so kind,
I strive to raise my mind

To match with the exalted hopes I own,
And fires, though all-engrossing, pure as mine
If prone to good, averse to all things base,
Contemner of what worldlings covet most,
I may become by long self-discipline.
Haply this humble boast
May win me in her fair esteem a place;
For sure the end and aim
Of all my tears, my sorrowing heart's sole claim,
Were the soft trembling of relenting eyes,
The generous lover's last, best, dearest prize.

Translation of Lady Dacre.

TO LEONORA.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF TASSO.

THY name is Honor's symbol, wholly fair,
Fit for an angel like thyself to bear;
The swan, not siren's music forms its sound,
The ciphers purple on a golden ground.
Go search on high from star to star to find
The thing most precious, shining and refined.
Bring gems from earth, bring pearls from the blue sea,
Their various glories show combined in thee.
Whence he who named these wished to represent
Thy rich perfections and divine descent,
As he who formed thee, with his mind pursued
The ideal image of celestial Good.
And thou, mine idol, formst in soul and frame
The living echo to that perfect name;
Nor is it beauty's fault, if, in the stir
Of passion, men make love to it and err.

Translation of J. H. Wiffin.

TO VITTORIA COLONNA.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

YES! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed;
For if of our affections none find grace
In sight of Heaven, then wherefore hath God made
The world which we inhabit? Better plea
Love can not have, than that in loving thee
Glory to that Eternal Peace is paid,
Who such divinity to thee imparts
As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.
His hope is treacherous only whose love dies
With beauty, which is varying every hour:
But in chaste hearts, uninfluenced by the power
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower,
That breathes on earth the air of Paradise.

Translation of William Wordsworth.

THE MIGHT OF ONE FAIR FACE.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

THE might of one fair face sublimes my love,
For it hath weaned my heart from low desires;
Nor death I heed, nor purgatorial fires.
Thy beauty, antepast of joys above,
Instructs me in the bliss that saints approve;
For O how good, how beautiful must be
The God that made so good a thing as thee,
So fair an image of the heavenly Dove!
Forgive me if I can not turn away
From those sweet eyes that are my earthly heaven,

For they are guiding stars, benignly given
To tempt my footsteps to the upward way;
And if I dwell too fondly in thy sight,
I live and love in God's peculiar light.

Translation of J. E. Taylor.

MYRRHA'S EYES.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF ANGELO POLIZIANO.

HE who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes there fleeth, girt with fire,
An angel of our Lord, a laughing boy,
Who lights in frozen hearts a flaming pyre,
And with such sweetness doth the soul destroy
That while it dies, it murmurs forth its joy:
Oh blessed am I to dwell in Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes a virtue still doth move,
So swift and with so fierce and strong a flight,
That it is like the lightning of high Jove,
Riving of iron and adamant the might;
Nathless the wound doth carry such delight
That he who suffers dwells in Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes a lovely messenger
Of joy so grave, so virtuous, doth flee,

That all proud souls are bound to bend to her.
So sweet her countenance, it turns the key
Of hard hearts locked in cold security:
Forth flies the prisoned soul to Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

In Myrrha's eyes Beauty doth make her throne,
And sweetly smile and sweetly speak her mind.
Such grace in her fair eyes a man hath known
As in the whole wide world he scarce may find;
Yet if she slay him with a glance too kind,
He lives again beneath her gazing eyes.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

Translation of John Addington Symonds.

TUSCAN LOVE-SONGS.

BEAUTY was born with you, fair maid;
The sun and moon inclined to you;
On you the snow her whiteness laid,
The rose her rich and radiant hue:
Saint Magdalen her hair unbound,
And Cupid taught you how to wound—
How to wound hearts Dan Cupid taught:
Your beauty drives me love-distraught.

O beauty, born in winter's night,
Born in the month of spotless snow:

Your face is like a rose so bright;
Your mother may be proud of you!
She may be proud, lady of love,
Such sunlight shines her house above:
She may be proud, lady of heaven,
Such sunlight to her home is given.

NAY, marvel not you are so fair;
For you beside the sea were born;
The sea-waves keep you bright and fair,
Like roses on their leafy thorn.
If roses grow on the rose-bush,
Your roses through midwinter blush;
If roses bloom on the rose-bed,
Your face can show both white and red.

Translation of John Addington Symonds.

MY WAND'RING THOUGHTS AWAKE TO LOVE ANEW.

FROM THE ROMANIC OF LE CHATELAIN DE COUCY.

("*Songs of the Trouvères.*")

MY wand'ring thoughts awake to love anew,
And bid me rise to sing the fairest fair
That e'er before the world of beauty knew,
That e'er kind Nature made her darling care;
And when, entranced, on all her charms I muse,
All themes but that alone my lays refuse—
Each wish my soul can form is hers alone,
My heart, my joys, my feelings all her own!

Since first my trembling heart became a prey,
I have no power to turn me back again;
At once I yield me to that passion's sway,
Nor idly seek its impulse to restrain.
If she, who is all sweetness, truth, and joy,
Were cold or fickle, were she proud or coy,
I might my tender hopes at once resign,
But not, thank Heaven! so sad a lot is mine!

If aught I blame, 'tis my hard fate alone,
Not those soft eyes, those gentle looks of thine,
On which I gazed till all my peace was gone!
Not at their dear perfection I repine.
I can not blame that form, all winning grace,
That fairy hand, that lip, that lovely face;
All I can beg is that she love me more,
That I may live still longer to adore!

Yes, all I ask of thee, O lady dear,
Is but what purest love may hope to find;
And if thine eyes, whose crystal light so clear
Reflect thy thoughts, be not to me unkind.
Well may'st thou see, by every mournful lay,
By all I ever look, or sigh, or say,
That I am thine, devoted to thy will,
And, 'midst my sadness, fondly thank thee still.

I thank thee, even for these secret sighs,
For all the mournful thoughts that on thee dwell;
For, as thou bad'st them in my bosom rise,
Thou canst revive their sweetest hopes as well.
The blissful remedy for all my woe,

In those dear eyes, that gentle voice, I know;
Should Fate forbid my soul to love thee more,
My life, alas! would with my grief be o'er.

To thee my heart, my wishes I resign,
I am thine own—O lady dear, be mine!

Translation by Louisa S. Costello.

SHE'S FAIRER THAN MY DREAMS.

FROM THE ROMANIC OF ELIAS CAIREL.

("*Songs of the Troubadours.*")

SHE'S fairer than my dreams could frame,
A vision of all charms combined;
And love can teach no word, no name,
To tell the sweetness of her mind.
Blest were my eyes that looked so long,
And found existence in their gaze;
Blest was my harp that waked the song
Which proudly sought to hymn her praise.

Yet, all perfection as she is,
I dare not make my secret known,
Lest, while I would increase my bliss,
I lose the little still my own.
For should she all my weakness know,
Perchance her eyes, now calm and sweet,
With anger or disdain might glow,
Or dread my ardent glance to meet.

Perchance no more her gentle words
Would charm and soothe me as of yore;

The precious hours she now accords
Would be my happy lot no more.
Oh, let me, then, in silence still
Lament and hope, and gaze and sigh;
Even though my silent sorrow kill,
To lose her were at once to die.

Translation of Louisa S. Costello.

I MUST BE WORTHY OF HER LOVE.

FROM THE ROMANIC OF RAIMOND DE MIRAVALS.

("*Songs of the Troubadours.*")

I *MUST* be worthy of her love,
For not the faintest shade
Of all the charms that round her move,
Within my heart can fade.
The glances of her gentle eyes
Are in my soul enshrined;
Her radiant smiles, her tender sighs,
Are treasured in my mind.

To see her is at once to learn
What beauty's power can do;
From all that pleased before to turn,
And wake to life anew.
To feel her charms all else efface,
To bask beneath their light;
To find her genius, sense, and grace,
A day that knows no night!
Ah! to be loyal, brave, sincere,
Her worthy slave to prove,

It is enough to think on her,
To see her and to love!

Translation of Louisa S. Costello.

VIRELAY.

FROM THE FRENCH OF JEAN FROISSART.

TOO long it seems ere I shall view
The maid so gentle, fair, and true,
Whom loyally I love:
Ah! for her sake, where'er I rove,
All scenes my care renew!
I have not seen her—ah, how long!
Nor heard the music of her tongue;
Though in her sweet and lovely mien
Such grace, such witchery, is seen,
Such precious virtues shine:
My joy, my hope, is in her smile,
And I must suffer pain the while,
Where once all bliss was mine.
Too long it seems!

O, tell her, Love!—the truth reveal,
Say that no lover yet could feel
Such sad, consuming pain:
While banished from her sight, I pine,
And still this wretched life is mine,
Till I return again.
She must believe me, for I find
So much her image haunts my mind,
So dear her memory,

That wheresoe'er my steps I bend,
The form my fondest thoughts attend
Is present to my eye.
Too long it seems!

Now tears my weary hours employ,
Regret and thoughts of sad annoy,
When waking or in sleep;
For hope my former care repaid,
In promises at parting made,
Which happy love might keep.
O, for one hour my truth to tell,
To speak of feelings known too well,
Of hopes too vainly dear!
But useless are my anxious sighs,
Since Fortune my return denies,
And keeps me lingering here.
Too long it seems!

Translation of Louisa S. Costello.

THE FAIREST THING IN MORTAL EYES.

FROM THE FRENCH OF CHARLES, DUKE OF ORLEANS.

TO make my lady's obsequies
My love a minster wrought,
And, in the chantry, service there
Was sung by doleful thought;
The tapers were of burning sighs,
That light and odor gave;
And sorrows, painted o'er with tears,
Enluminèd her grave;
And round about, in quaintest guise,

Was carved, "Within this tomb there lies
The fairest thing in mortal eyes."

Above her lieth spread a tomb
  Of gold and sapphires blue:
The gold doth show her blessedness,
  The sapphires mark her true;
For blessedness and truth in her
  Were livelily portrayed,
When gracious God with both his hands
  Her goodly substance made.
He framed her in such wondrous wise,
She was, to speak without disguise,
The fairest thing in mortal eyes.

No more, no more! my heart doth faint
  When I the life recall
Of her, who lived so free from taint,
  So virtuous deemed by all—
That in herself was so complete,
  I think that she was ta'en
By God to deck his Paradise,
  And with his saints to reign;
Whom, while on earth, each one did prize,
The fairest thing in mortal eyes.

But naught our tears avail, or cries;
  All soon or late in death shall sleep;
  Nor living wight long time may keep
The fairest thing in mortal eyes.

Translation of Henry Francis Cary.

TO MARY STUART.

FROM THE FRENCH OF PIERRE DE RONSARD.

ALL beauty, granted as a boon to earth,
That is, has been, or ever can have birth,
Compared to hers, is void, and Nature's care
Ne'er formed a creature so divinely fair.

In spring amidst the lilies she was born,
And purer tints her peerless face adorn;
And though Adonis' blood the rose may paint,
Beside her bloom the rose's hues are faint:
With all his richest store Love decked her eyes;
The Graces each, those daughters of the skies,
Strove which should make her to the world most dear,
And, to attend her, left their native sphere.

The day that was to bear her far away—
Why was I mortal to behold that day?
O, had I senseless grown, nor heard, nor seen!
Or that my eyes a ceaseless fount had been,
That I might weep, as weep amidst their bowers
The nymphs, when winter winds have cropped their flowers,
Or when rude torrents the clear streams deform,
Or when the trees are riven by the storm!
Or rather, would that I some bird had been
Still to be near her in each changing scene,
Still on the highest mast to watch all day,
And like a star to mark her vessel's way:
The dangerous billows past, on shore, on sea,
Near that dear face it still were mine to be!

O France! where are thy ancient champions gone—
Roland, Rinaldo?—is there living none
Her steps to follow and her safety guard,
And deem her lovely looks their best reward—
Which might subdue the pride of mighty Jove,
To leave his heaven, and languish for her love?
No fault is hers, but in her royal state—
For simple Love dreads to approach the great;
He flies from regal pomp, that treacherous snare,
Where truth unmarked may wither in despair.

Wherever destiny her path may lead,
Fresh-springing flowers will bloom beneath her tread,
All Nature will rejoice, the waves be bright,
The tempest check its fury at her sight,
The sea be calm: her beauty to behold,
The sun shall crown her with his rays of gold—
Unless he fears, should he approach her throne,
Her majesty should quite eclipse his own.

Translation of Louisa S. Costello.

HOW FAIR SHE IS!

FROM THE FRENCH OF BÉRANGER.

YE gods! she is so fair, so sweet,
I've cast my life beneath her feet;
In her deep, melancholy eyes
All love's raptured languor lies;
Gentle zephyrs, blowing round her,
With their choicest sweets have crowned her;
She's fair as morning's rosy light,
Whilst I am gloomy as the night.

Ye gods! she is so fair, so sweet,
I've cast my life beneath her feet;
The tinge upon her golden hair
Gleams as though sunset loitered there;
Clever she is in all but this,
She scarcely knows how fair she is;
She's fair as morning's rosy light,
Whilst I am gloomy as the night.

Ye gods! she is so fair, so sweet,
I've cast my life beneath her feet;
Though love had been my fondest dream,
And woman's charms my favorite theme,
Before she brightened up my heart
Love fled away, or kept apart;
She's fair as morning's rosy light,
Whilst I am gloomy as the night.

Ye gods! she is so fair, so sweet,
I've cast my life beneath her feet—
A life of barely thirty years,
And yet how old with doubts and fears,
Until with love, and hope, and truth,
She seemed to bring me back my youth;
For she was fair as morning's light,
Whilst I was gloomy as the night.

Translation of Harry Curwen.

A LOVE-SONG.

FROM THE FRENCH OF LAMARTINE.

O LYRE! if thou canst rival on thy strings
The tender trembling of the zephyr's wings,

Athwart the feathering oar,
Or waves that murmur on until they die,
Or the fond turtle's plaintive cooing cry,
Upon the echoing shore;

If like the balmy breath of some sweet rose
Thy chords the glorious mysteries disclose,
Deep hidden in the skies,
Where angels tell in azure vaults above
Their soundless ecstasies of yearning love—
Like soft eyes unto eyes;

If thy sweet strain, in its melodious roll,
Could fan and kiss my darling's fainting soul,
Like Love's first thrilling breath,
And cradle it upon the airy shrouds,
As heaven's soft wind the stilly silver clouds,
At daylight's purple death;

While sleeping on the dainty flowers she lies—
My voice would breathe in longing-laden sighs
A lifetime of emotion,
Pure as the joys with which her glances fill me,
Sweet as the fairy murmurings which thrill me
From dreamland's echoing ocean!

Open your eyes, my sweet one! let me see
If your fringed lashes hide one thought of me—
One message from your mind;
To me your liquid depths are far more dear
Than the first burst of sunlight warm and clear,
To opened eyes—born blind.

One bended arm her drooping neck caresses;
The other, o'er her forehead softly presses
Its snow-flushed covering,
Just as the turtle, when in search of sleep,
Curves her white rounded neck, and plunges deep
Her head 'neath ruffled wing.

The low-breathed music of her bosom's motion
Is mingling with the harmony of ocean;
While her long silken lashes
Shadow a moment on her cheek, then seem
To pass as quickly as a shadowy dream
Across a deep eye flashes.

Sweet be your dreams, my darling! soft your rest!
What thought my own is sending through your breast
This deep, this long-drawn sigh?—
Twin waves that blanch the white rays of the moon,
In billowing motion, then, ah me! too soon
They murmur on to die!

* * * * * * *

Why hide your charms beneath your silken hair?
Let me dispel the cloud that shields your blushes;
Why should you blush, my sweet, at being fair?
Yet morn at its own beauty glows and flushes,
And loveliness is ever decked with modest care,
Where beauty is, be sure a veil is nigh,
As if to guard it for the sky.

Your eyes are sister rivers,
Where heaven is imaged bright,

Where the soft fringe quivers
And shows their azure light,
Till each thought that in you lies,
Flashes, darling, through your eyes,
And leaves its image there,
Just as on the river's breast
The wandering shadows rest
Of swans that cleave the air.

Your brow, rich locks half veiling,
Half covering in their play,
Is like a sweet night paling,
And longing for the day;
And your mouth, dear, with its smiles
Like the retiring wiles
Of ocean backward blown,
When she half reluctant grieves
For the dainty pearls she leaves
Upon the borders strewn.

Your feet one moment lying
Half hidden in the grass,
Till all the flowers are vying
To kiss them as they pass,
And each motion of that warm,
Lithesome, dainty, soft-curved form,
So unconstrained, so free,
Blends like some ethereal choir
To the soft attunèd lyre,
In one sweet harmony.

Translation of Harry Curwen.

A SERENADE.

FROM THE FRENCH OF P. DUPONT.

ALL roses are alike to me,
Alike to me the myriad flowers,
That May-time, in its sunny glee,
Spreads on the valleys and the bowers;
But in the garland of young girls,
Which glows in fragrance to the sun,
I worship, and I see but one,
My pearl of flowers—my flower of pearls!

Each planet and each wandering star,
Dancing in circles in the skies,
Lulls some young fool to dreams afar,
But all are sisters in my eyes;
For all the lights that round us shine,
All that a maddened brain romances,
Are nothing, darling, to the glances
From those soft, loving eyes of thine.

The nightingale may sing and die,
And still on that same linden-tree
Another bird will love and sigh,
Before the first has ceased to be.
The sweetest songs we mortals hear
In this dull, struggling world below,
All fail to soothe our grief, our woe,
Save thy soft, thrilling accents, dear.

Let all the sweet flowers fade away.
Let all the song-birds die of love,

The cheery light forsake the day,
  The stars fade in the heavens above;
Rather than that my rose of girls,
  My star of gold, my passionate song,
  Should suffer half a moment's wrong—
My pearl of flowers, my flower of pearls!

Translation of Harry Curwen.

ALL—ALL IS LOVE.

FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO.

TO idealize our very dreams—
  Women were given us for this,
And every power in nature seems
  To teach us how to love and kiss.

Great Love for girdle proudly owns
  The deep sea, and the azure vast—
Piercing ahead we hear his tones,
  And in dim vistas of the past;

While all that breathes with beauty laden
  Pays Love its tribute for an hour;
For if God had not formed the maiden,
  He surely had not formed the flower.

Lying on beauty's bosom lightly
  The diamond sheds its choicest hue;
Would blue sapphires sparkle brightly
  If blue eyes did not sparkle too?

The perfumed breezes from the south,
  The passion-flower, the asphodel,

The bud with rosy, opening mouth
Have all their tale of love to tell;

Then come, my sweet, since all is love,
Whether we look that side, or this,
Around, beneath us, or above,
Come, darling, prove it with a kiss.

Translation of Harry Curwen.

MY MISTRESS.

FROM THE FRENCH OF AUGUSTE BRIZEUX.

IN my mistress I loved naught at first but her beauty,
The rosy fresh mouth to which smiles seemed a duty,
The shoulder's contour smooth and shining like gold,
And the lithe supple figure that the mirror adorning,
Bent at each step, as under wings of the morning
Bend willows o'er waves their own grace to behold.

I knew then the beauty: naught to me it imported,
If a soul in her bright eyes, when spoke she, disported
Under the long-penciled and dark Arab brows,
Happy, happy to breathe the chaste air her surrounding,
And to hear the pure crystal of her accent resounding,
I moved in a dream when we mingled our vows.

Pardon if thou canst! Lo, at thy feet I cry, pardon!
When pale and heart-broken in the old walled garden
More feeble than thou, woman, more feeble by far,
I came all in tears, thy aid—thy counsel to borrow,
Then woke thy hid beauty in the midst of my sorrow,
And thy soul in its grandeur shone out like a star!

O tears! O deep sighs! O love's mystic story!
Women, to charm us, have two crowns as their glory,
A visible beauty and a beauty unseen—
Beings twice-gifted! souls all-powerful and tender!
Our hearts and our wishes to them we surrender;
Firm-bound in their fetters, we own them our queen.

Translation of Toru Dutt.

THE PRAISE OF WOMAN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER.

ALL honor to women!—they soften and leaven
The cares of the world with the roses of heaven—
The ravishing fetters of love they entwine;
Their charms from the world's eye modestly veiling,
They foster and nourish, with care never failing,
The fire eternal of feelings divine.

Man's wild force, in constant motion,
Spurns the bounds by truth assigned;
And, on passion's stormy ocean,
To and fro is tossed his mind.
Peace his bosom visits never,
As he heaps up scheme on scheme,
And through space pursues forever
Each vain phantom of his dream.

But with her sweet look, so soft and enchaining,
Woman, the fugitive gently restraining,
Summons him back to the regions of earth;
The daughter of Nature, with meekness unshaken.

The home of her mother has never forsaken—
Has ever been true to the place of her birth.

Man, the torrent sternly breasting,
Spends his days in ceaseless strife;
Never pausing, never resting,
Wild he treads the path of life.
All his plans to ruin bringing,
Ne'er his changing wish grows cold,
When destroyed, again upspringing,
Like the Hydra's heads of old.

But in a gentler sphere passing her hours,
Woman plucks ever the moment's sweet flowers,
Lovingly tends them with fostering care;
Freer than man, though less wide her dominion,
Soaring above him on wisdom's bright pinion,
Glitt'ring in poesy's circle so fair.

Selfishness and pride combining,
Man's cold bosom ne'er can prove,
Round a fond heart fondly twining.
All the heavenly bliss of love.
Soul communion never feeling,
Tears to him no balm impart,
Life's hard conflicts only steeling
Sterner still his rugged heart.

But as when softly to Zephyr replying,
Æolus' harp gently breathes forth its sighing,
The soft soul of woman its sighs breathes forth too;
At the sad tale of misery tenderly grieving,

See we her bosom with sympathy heaving
Her melting eye sparkling with heavenly dew.

Man, imperious, stern, insulting,
Knows no law save that of might;
Scythians wave their swords exulting—
Persians tremble in affright,
Furious passions raging wildly
Fiercely struggle day by day;
And, where Charis governed mildly,
Eris now asserts her sway.

But, with her eloquence winning, yet yielding,
Woman, the scepter of love gently wielding,
Quenches the smoldering embers of strife;
Each ling'ring emotion of hatred effaces,
Compels the late foes to unite their embraces,
Rivets the transient pleasures of life.

Translation of Edgar A. Bowring.

THE SONG OF SONGS.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.

FAIR woman's body is a song
Inscribed by our great Maker
In Nature's mighty album erst,
When moved to life to wake her.

Ah, yes! propitious was the hour
When thus he showed compassion!
The coy rebellious stuff he worked
In true artistic fashion.

Yes, woman's body is, 'mong songs,
The song most sweet and tender,
And wondrous strophes are her limbs,
So snowy white and slender.

And then her neck, her glistening neck—
Oh, what a godlike notion!—
Where the main thought, her little head,
Rocks with a graceful motion.

The song has flesh, ribs, hands, and feet,
No abstract poem this is!
With lips that rhyme deliciously
It smiles and sweetly kisses.

True poetry is breathing here,
Grace shines in each direction;
The song upon its forehead bears
The stamp of all perfection.

I'll praise thee, Lord, and in the dust
Will humbly kneel to show it;
Bunglers are we, compared with thee,
Thou glorious heavenly Poet.

Before the splendor of thy song
I'll bow in adoration,
And to its study day and night
Pay closest application.

Yes, day and night I'll study it,
No loss of time admitting;

So shall I soon with overwork
Be thinner than befitting.*

Translation of Edgar A. Bowring.

LOVE'S SALUTATION.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.

DARLING maiden, who can be
Ever found to equal thee?
To thy service joyfully
Shall my life be pledged by me.

Thy sweet eyes gleam tenderly,
Like soft moonbeams o'er the sea;
Lights of rosy harmony
O'er thy red cheeks wander free.

From thy small mouth, full of glee,
Rows of pearls peep charmingly;
But thy bosom's drapery
Veils thy fairest jewelry.

Pure love only could it be
That so sweetly thrilled through me,
When I whilome gazed on thee,
Darling maid so fair to see.

Translation of Edgar A. Bowring.

* One verse is here omitted from this poem; a liberty that has been found necessary in a few other instances. Whatever may be the literary value of certain outspoken passages, nothing can be admitted into this volume that fastidious women would not be willing to hear spoken in any company.—EDITOR.

WOMEN.

FROM THE SPANISH OF CRISTOVAL DE CASTILLEJO.

HOW dreary and lone
The world would appear,
If women were none!
'Twould be like a fair,
With neither fun nor business there.

Without their smile,
Life would be tasteless, vain, and vile;
A chaos of perplexity;
A body without a soul 'twould be;
A roving spirit, borne
Upon the winds forlorn;
A tree without or flowers or fruit;
A reason with no resting-place,
A castle with no governor to it;
A house without a base.
What are we, what our race,
How good for nothing and base,
Without fair woman to aid us:
What could we do, where should we go,
How should we wander in night and woe,
But for woman to lead us?
How could we love, if woman were not:
Love,—the brightest part of our lot;
Love,—the only charm of living;
Love,—the only gift worth giving?
Who would take charge of your house—say, who—
Kitchen, and dairy, and money-chest—
Who but the women, who guard them best—

Guard, and adorn them too?
Who like them has a constant smile,
Full of peace, of meekness full,
When life's edge is blunt and dull,
And sorrow and sin, in frowning file,
Stand by the path in which we go
Down to the grave through wasting woe?
All that is good is theirs, is theirs—
All we give, and all we get;
And if a beam of glory yet
Over the gloomy earth appears,
O, 'tis theirs! O, 'tis theirs!—
They are the guard, the soul, the seal
Of human hope and human weal;
They—they—none but they;
Woman—sweet woman!—let none say nay!

Translation of Edgar A. Bowring.

SYLVIA'S SMILE.

FROM THE SPANISH OF FRANCISCO DE BORJA Y ESQUILACHE.

WHEN bright and gay the waters roll
In crystal rivers to the sea,
'Midst shining pearls, they take, my soul,
Their sweetest, loveliest smile from thee;
And when their dimpling currents flow,
They imitate thy laughing brow.

When Morning from his dusky bed
Awakes with cold and slumbering eye,
Ere yet he wears his tints of red,
He looks to see if thou art nigh—

To offer thee a diadem
Of every ruby, every gem.

When Spring leads on the joyous Sun,
He brightens on thy eyes, and takes
A nobler luster: when the dun
And darksome April first awakes,
And gives his better smiles to May,
He keeps for thee his fairest day.

There are some idle bards who dream
That they have seen, with raptured eyes,
The smiling field, the dimpled stream,
And (strange deceit!) the laughing skies:
My Sylvia! field, nor stream, nor sky
E'er smiled but when thy smile was nigh.

Translation of Edgar A. Bowring.

PRAISE OF LITTLE WOMEN.

FROM THE SPANISH OF JUAN RUIZ DE HITA.

I WISH to make my sermon brief—to shorten my oration—
For a never-ending sermon is my utter detestation:
I like short women—suits at law without procrastination—
And am always most delighted with things of short duration.

A babbler is a laughing-stock; he's a fool who's always grinning;
But little women love so much, one falls in love with sinning.
There are women who are very tall, and yet not worth the winning,
And in the change of short for long, repentance finds beginning.

To praise the little women Love besought me in my musing;
To tell their noble qualities is quite beyond refusing:

So I'll praise the little women, and you'll find the thing amusing;
They are, I know, as cold as snow, whilst flames around diffusing.

They're cold without, whilst warm within the flame of Love is raging;
They're gay and pleasant in the street—soft, cheerful, and engaging·
They're thrifty and discreet at home, the cares of life assuaging:
All this and more—try, and you'll find how true is my presaging.

In a little precious stone what splendor meets the eyes!
In a little lump of sugar how much of sweetness lies!
So in a little woman love grows and multiplies:
You recollect the proverb says—*A word unto the wise.*

A pepper-corn is very small, but seasons every dinner
More than all other condiments, although 'tis sprinkled thinner:
Just so a little woman is, if Love will let you win her—
There's not a joy in all the world you will not find within her.

And as within the little rose you find the richest dyes,
And in a little grain of gold much price and value lies,
As from a little balsam much odor doth arise,
So in a little woman there's a taste of paradise.

Even as the little ruby its secret worth betrays,
Color, and price, and virtue, in the clearness of its rays—
Just so a little woman much excellence displays,
Beauty, and grace, and love, and fidelity always.

The skylark and the nightingale, though small and light of wing,
Yet warble sweeter in the grove than all the birds that sing:
And so a little woman, though a very little thing,
Is sweeter far than sugar, and flowers that bloom in spring.

The magpie and the golden thrush have many a thrilling note,
Each as a gay musician doth strain his little throat—

A merry little songster in his green and yellow coat:
And such a little woman is, when Love doth make her dote.

There's naught can be compared to her, throughout the wide creation;
She is a paradise on earth—our greatest consolation—
So cheerful, gay, and happy, so free from all vexation:
In fine, she's better in the proof than in anticipation.

If as her size increases are woman's charms decreased,
Then surely it is good to be from all the great released:
Now of two evils choose the less—said a wise man of the East;
By consequence, of womankind be sure to choose the least.

Translation from North American Review.

HOW FAIR THE MAIDEN!

FROM THE PORTUGUESE OF GIL VICENTE.

HOW fair the maiden! what can be
So fair, so beautiful, as she?

Ask the mariner who sails
Over the joyous sea,
If wave, or star, or friendly gales,
Are half so fair as she.

Ask the knight on his prancing steed
Returning from victory,
If weapon, or war, or arrow's speed,
Is half so fair as she.

Ask the shepherd who leads his flocks
Along the flowery lea,
If the valley's lap, or the sun-crowned rocks,
Are half so fair as she.

Translation of Edgar A. Bowring.

AMANDA.

FROM THE SWEDISH OF ERIC JOHAN STAGNELIUS.

WHERE sun and flower are beaming,
Amanda's charms appear;
Her beauty's rays are streaming
Round all this earthly sphere:
The breeze, when gently blowing—
The rose that scents the grove—
The vine, when brightly glowing—
All tell of her I love.

I hear her song's sweet numbers,
When Zephyr's breezy wings
Sweep o'er the gold harp's slumbers,
And wake its tuneful strings.
All—all the charms of nature
Amanda's beauty bear,
And show, in every feature,
Her godhead imaged there.

The spirits of the dying
Must quit this clay's control;
But they to rest are flying
In regions of the soul—
The floods, now onward striding,
Are foaming, fierce, and free;
Yet soon their waves, subsiding,
Will slumber in the sea.

But I must vainly languish
For joys I ne'er can know,

And wear a cureless anguish
In loneliness and woe!
Fair goddess! I shall ever
Behold thy beauty shine
Like stars above—but never
Can hope to call thee mine!

Translation from Foreign Review.

Sixth Evening

SIXTH EVENING.

Whosoever hath "Delight in Disorder," shall be entertained here with much Variety and little Order but Caprice, the Selections ranging from Swift to the Poets of our own day, English and American.

VANESSA.

FROM "CADENUS AND VANESSA," BY JONATHAN SWIFT.

IN a glad hour Lucina's aid
Produced on earth a wondrous maid,
On whom the queen of love was bent
To try a new experiment.
She threw her law-books on the shelf,
And thus debated with herself:
"Since men allege, they ne'er can find
Those beauties in a female mind,
Which raise a flame that will endure
Forever uncorrupt and pure;
If 'tis with reason they complain,
This infant shall restore my reign.
I'll search where every virtue dwells,
From courts inclusive down to cells:
What preachers talk, or sages write;
These I will gather and unite,

And represent them to mankind
Collected in that infant's mind."
  This said, she plucks in heaven's high bowers
A sprig of amaranthine flowers,
In nectar thrice infuses bays,
Three times refined in Titan's rays;
Then calls the Graces to her aid,
And sprinkles thrice the new-born maid:
From whence the tender skin assumes
A sweetness above all perfumes:
From whence a cleanliness remains
Incapable of outward stains:
From whence that decency of mind,
So lovely in the female kind,
Where not one careless thought intrudes,
Less modest than the speech of prudes;
Where never blush was called in aid,
That spurious virtue in a maid,
A virtue but at second-hand;
They blush because they understand.
  The Graces next would act their part,
And showed but little of their art;
Their work was half already done,
The child with native beauty shone;
The outward form no help required:
Each, breathing on her thrice, inspired
That gentle, soft, engaging air,
Which in old times adorned the fair:
And said, "Vanessa be the name
By which thou shalt be known to fame;
Vanessa, by the gods enrolled:
Her name on earth shall not be told."

But still the work was not complete;
When Venus thought on a deceit:
Drawn by her doves, away she flies,
And finds out Pallas in the skies.
"Dear Pallas, I have been this morn
To see a lovely infant born;
A boy in yonder isle below,
So like my own without his bow,
By beauty could your heart be won,
You'd swear it is Apollo's son:
But it shall ne'er be said a child
So hopeful has by me been spoiled,
I have enough besides to spare,
And give him wholly to your care."
Wisdom's above suspecting wiles:
The queen of learning gravely smiles,
Down from Olympus comes with joy,
Mistakes Vanessa for a boy;
Then sows within her tender mind
Seeds long unknown to womankind; *
For manly bosoms chiefly fit,
The seeds of knowledge, judgment, wit.
Her soul was suddenly endued
With justice, truth, and fortitude;
With honor, which no breath can stain,
Which malice must attack in vain;
With open heart and bounteous hand.
But Pallas here was at a stand;
She knew, in our degenerate days,

* It may be said that the poet here glorifies his heroine at the expense of the sex, but let this be forgiven for the sake of the general charm of the picture.—EDITOR.

Bare virtue could not live on praise;
That meat must be with money bought:
She therefore, upon second thought,
Infused, yet as it were by stealth,
Some small regard for state and wealth·
Of which, as she grew up, there staid
A tincture in the prudent maid:
She managed her estate with care,
Yet liked three footmen to her chair.
But lest he should neglect his studies
Like a young heir, the thrifty goddess
(For fear young master should be spoiled)
Would use him like a younger child;
And, after long computing, found
'Twould come to just five thousand pound.
  The queen of love was pleased, and proud,
To see Vanessa thus endowed:
She doubted not but such a dame
Through every breast would dart a flame
That every rich and lordly swain
With pride would drag about her chain;
That scholars would forsake their books,
To study bright Vanessa's looks;
As she advanced, that womankind
Would by her model form their mind,
And all their conduct would be tried
By her, as an unerring guide.

TO LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

BY ALEXANDER POPE.

I.

IN beauty or wit
No mortal as yet
To question your empire has dared;
But men of discerning
Have thought that in learning
To yield to a lady was hard.

II.

Impertinent schools
With musty dull rules
Have reading to females denied;
So papists refuse
The Bible to use,
Lest flocks should be wise as their guide.

III.

'Twas a woman at first
(Indeed she was curst)
In knowledge that tasted delight;
And sages agree
The laws should decree
To the first possessor the right.

IV.

Then bravely, fair dame,
Resume the old claim
Which to your whole sex does belong;
And let men receive

From a second bright Eve
The knowledge of right and of wrong.

v.

But if the first Eve
Hard doom did receive
When only one apple had she;
What punishment new
Shall be found out for you,
Who, tasting, have robbed the whole tree?

A COMPARISON.

BY WILLIAM COWPER.

SWEET stream that winds through yonder glade,
Apt emblem of a virtuous maid—
Silent and chaste she steals along
Far from the world's gay, busy throng,
With gentle yet prevailing force,
Intent upon her destined course;
Graceful and useful all she does,
Blessing and blest where'er she goes,—
Pure bosomed as that watery glass,
And heaven reflected in her face.

A PORTRAIT.

FROM "TALES OF THE HALL," BY GEORGE CRABBE.

A VILLAGE maid, unvexed by want or love,
Could not with more delight than Lucy move:
The village lark, high mounted in the spring,
Could not with purer joy than Lucy sing;

Her cares all light, her pleasures all sincere,
Her duty joy, and her companion dear;
In tender friendship and in true respect
Lived aunt and niece, no flattery, no neglect—
They read, walked, visited—together prayed,
Together slept the matron and the maid:
There was such goodness, such pure nature seen
In Lucy's looks, a manner so serene;
Such harmony in motion, speech, and air,
That without fairness she was more than fair:
Had more than beauty in each speaking grace
That lent their cloudless glory to the face;
Where mild good sense in placid looks was shown,
And felt in every bosom but her own.
The one presiding feature in her mind,
Was the pure meekness of a will resigned;
A tender spirit, freed from all pretense
Of wit, and pleased in mild benevolence.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

SWEET Highland girl! a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower;
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head:
And these gray rocks; that household lawn;
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake;
This little bay; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy abode—

In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream;
Such forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep!
But, O fair creature! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,
I bless thee, vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart;
God shield thee to thy latest years!
Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away:
For never saw I mien or face
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scattered, like a random seed,
Remote from men, thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacedness;
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a mountaineer;
A face with gladness overspread;
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred;
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech—

A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life!
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind
Thus beating up against the wind.

GENEVIEVE.

BY SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

MAID of my love, sweet Genevieve,
In beauty's light you glide along;
Your eye is like the star of eve,
And sweet your voice as seraph's song.
Yet not your heavenly beauty gives
This heart with passion soft to glow;
Within your soul a voice there lives,
It bids you hear the tale of woe.
When, sinking low, the sufferer wan
Beholds no hand outstretched to save;
Fair as the bosom of the swan
That rises graceful o'er the wave,
I've seen your breast with pity heave,
And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve.

SONG TO FANNY.

BY JAMES SMITH.

NATURE, thy fair and smiling face
Has now a double power to bless;
For 'tis the glass in which I trace
My absent Fanny's loveliness.

Her heavenly eyes above me shine,
The rose reflects her modest blush,
She breathes in every eglantine,
She sings in every warbling thrush.

That her dear form alone I see,
Need not excite surprise in any;
For Fanny's all the world to me,
And all the world to me is Fanny.

CAROLINE.

TO THE EVENING STAR.

BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

GEM of the crimson-colored even,
Companion of retiring day,
Why at the closing gates of heaven,
Belovèd star, dost thou delay?

So fair thy pensile beauty burns,
When soft the tear of twilight flows;
So due thy plighted love returns,
To chambers brighter than the rose:

To Peace, to Pleasure, and to Love,
So kind a star thou seem'st to be,
Sure some enamored orb above
Descends and burns to meet with thee.

Thine is the breathing, blushing hour,
When all unheavenly passions fly,
Chased by the soul-subduing power
Of Love's delicious witchery.

O ! sacred to the fall of day,
  Queen of propitious stars, appear,
And early rise, and long delay,
  When Caroline herself is here !

Shine on her chosen green resort,
  Whose trees the sunward summit crown,
And wanton flowers that well may court
  An angel's feet to tread them down.

Shine on her sweetly-scented road,
  Thou star of evening's purple dome,
That lead'st the nightingale abroad,
  And guid'st the pilgrim to his home.

Shine, where my charmer's sweeter breath
  Embalms the soft exhaling dew,
Where dying winds a sigh bequeath
  To kiss the cheek of rosy hue.

Where, winnowed by the gentle air,
  Her silken tresses darkly flow,
And fall upon her brow so fair,
  Like shadows on the mountain snow.

Thus, ever thus, at day's decline,
  In converse sweet, to wander far,
O bring with thee my Caroline,
  And thou shalt be my ruling star !

THE GIRL OF CADIZ.

BY LORD BYRON.

OH, never talk again to me
Of northern climes and British ladies;
It has not been your lot to see
Like me, the lovely girl of Cadiz.
Although her eyes be not of blue,
Nor fair her locks, like English lasses',
How far its own expressive hue
The languid azure eye surpasses!

Prometheus-like, from heaven she stole
The fire that through those silken lashes
In darkest glances seems to roll,
From eyes that can not hide their flashes;
And as along her bosom steal
In lengthened flow her raven tresses,
You'd swear each clustering lock could feel,
And curled to give her neck caresses.

Our English maids are long to woo,
And frigid even in possession;
And if their charms be fair to view,
Their lips are slow at love's confession;
But, born beneath a brighter sun,
For love ordained the Spanish maid is,
And who, when fondly, fairly won,
Enchants you like the girl of Cadiz?

The Spanish maid is no coquette,
Nor joys to see a lover tremble;
And if she love, or if she hate,

Alike she knows not to dissemble.
Her heart can ne'er be bought or sold—
Howe'er it beats, it beats sincerely;
And, though it will not bend to gold,
'Twill love you long, and love you dearly.

The Spanish girl that meets your love
Ne'er taunts you with a mock denial;
For every thought is bent to prove
Her passion in the hour of trial.
When thronging foemen menace Spain,
She dares the deed and shares the danger;
And should her lover press the plain,
She hurls the spear, her love's avenger.

And when, beneath the evening star,
She mingles in the gay bolero;
Or sings to her attuned guitar
Of Christian knight or Moorish hero;
Or counts her beads with fairy hand
Beneath the twinkling rays of Hesper;
Or joins devotion's choral band
To chant the sweet and hallowed vesper:

In each her charms the heart must move
Of all who venture to behold her.
Then let not maids less fair reprove,
Because her bosom is not colder;
Through many a clime 'tis mine to roam
Where many a soft and melting maid is,
But none abroad, and few at home,
May match the dark-eyed girl of Cadiz.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

BY LORD BYRON.

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half-impaired the nameless grace,
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face:
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

TO MARY,

ON RECEIVING HER PICTURE.

BY LORD BYRON.

THIS faint resemblance of thy charms,
Though strong as mortal art could give,
My constant heart of fear disarms,
Revives my hopes, and bids me live.

Here I can trace the locks of gold
  Which round thy snowy forehead wave,
The cheek which sprung from beauty's mold,
  The lips which made me beauty's slave.

Here I can trace—ah, no! that eye,
  Whose azure floats in liquid fire,
Must all the painter's art defy,
  And bid him from the task retire.

Here I behold its beauteous hue;
  But where's the beam so sweetly straying,
Which gave a luster to its blue,
  Like Luna o'er the ocean playing?

Sweet copy! far more dear to me,
  Lifeless, unfeeling as thou art,
Than all the living forms could be,
  Save her who placed thee next my heart.

She placed it, sad, with needless fear,
  Lest time might shake my wavering soul,
Unconscious that her image there
  Held every sense in fast control.

Through hours, through years, through time, 'twill cheer;
  My hope, in gloomy moments, raise;
In life's last conflict 'twill appear,
  And meet my fond expiring gaze.

AN EVE IN HER EDEN.

FROM "THE SENSITIVE-PLANT," BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THERE was a Power in this sweet place,
An Eve in this Eden; a ruling grace
Which to the flowers did they waken or dream,
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,
Whose form was upborne by a lovely mind
Which, dilating, had molded her mien and motion
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the ocean,

Tended the garden from morn to even:
And the meteors of that sublunar heaven,
Like the lamps of the air when Night walks forth,
Laughed round her footsteps up from the earth!

She had no companion of mortal race,
But her tremulous breath and her flushing face
Told, whilst the moon kissed the sleep from her eyes,
That her dreams were less slumber than Paradise:

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet sake
Had deserted heaven while the stars were awake,
As if yet around her he lingering were,
Though the veil of daylight concealed him from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it prest;
You might hear by the heaving of her breast,
That the coming and going of the wind
Brought pleasure there and left passion behind.

And wherever her airy footstep trod,
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod
Erased its light vestige, with shadowy sweep,
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark-green deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden sweet
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet;
I doubt not they felt the spirit that came
From her glowing fingers through all their frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the stream
On those that were faint with the sunny beam;
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers
She emptied the rain of the thunder-showers.

She lifted their heads with her tender hands,
And sustained them with rods and osier bands;
If the flowers had been her own infants she
Could never have nursed them more tenderly.

RUTH.

BY THOMAS HOOD.

SHE stood breast-high amid the corn,
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripened—such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell,
But long lashes veiled a light,
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;—
Thus she stood amid the stooks
Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure, I said, Heaven did not mean
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
Lay thy sheaf adown, and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

FAIR INES.

BY THOMAS HOOD.

O H saw ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the west,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest;
She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

Oh turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivaled bright;
And blessèd will the lover be

That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek,
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier
Who rode so gayly by thy side,
And whispered thee so near!
Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true-lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore;
It would have been a beauteous dream,
If it had been no more!

Alas! alas! fair Ines!
She went away with song,
With music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, farewell,
To her you've loved so long!

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines!
That vessel never bore

So fair a lady on its deck,
  Nor danced so light before :—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
  And sorrow on the shore !
The smile that blest one lover's heart
  Has broken many more !

A VIOLET IN HER HAIR.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

A VIOLET in her lovely hair,
  A rose upon her bosom fair !
    But oh, her eyes
A lovelier violet disclose,
And her ripe lips the sweetest rose
    That's 'neath the skies.

A lute beneath her graceful hand
Breathes music forth at her command ;
    But still her tongue
Far richer music calls to birth
Than all the minstrel power on earth
    Can give to song.

And thus she moves in tender light,
The purest ray, where all is bright,
    Serene and sweet ;
And sheds a graceful influence round
That hallows e'en the very ground
    Beneath her feet !

A HEALTH.

BY EDWARD COATE PINKNEY.

I FILL this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burdened bee
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measure of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain,

And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh, my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon.
Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name!

OH FAIREST OF THE RURAL MAIDS.

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

OH fairest of the rural maids!
Thy birth was in the forest shades;
Green boughs, and glimpses of the sky,
Were all that met thine infant eye.

Thy sports, thy wanderings when a child,
Were ever in the sylvan wild;
And all the beauty of the place
Is in thy heart and on thy face.

The twilight of the trees and rocks
Is in the light shade of thy locks;
Thy step is as the wind, that weaves
Its playful way among the leaves.

Thine eyes are springs, in whose serene
And silent waters heaven is seen;
Their lashes are the herbs that look
On their young figures in the brook.

The forest depths by foot unpressed
Are not more sinless than thy breast;
The holy peace that fills the air
Of these calm solitudes, is there.

I LOVE MY LOVE.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

WHAT is the meaning of the song
That rings so clear and loud,
Thou nightingale amid the copse—
Thou lark above the cloud?
What says thy song, thou joyous thrush,
Up in the walnut-tree?
"I love my Love, because I know
My Love loves me."

What is the meaning of thy thought,
O maiden fair and young?
There is such pleasure in thine eyes,
Such music on thy tongue;
There is such glory on thy face—
What can the meaning be?
"I love my Love, because I know
My Love loves me."

O happy words! at Beauty's feet
We sing them ere our prime;

And when the early summers pass,
  And Care comes on with Time,
Still be it ours, in Care's despite,
  To join the chorus free—
"I love my Love, because I know
  My Love loves me."

ANNABEL LEE.

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE.

IT was many and many a year ago,
  In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden lived, whom you may know
  By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
  Than to love, and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
  In this kingdom by the sea;
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
  I and my Annabel Lee—
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
  Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
  In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
  My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her high-born kinsmen came,
  And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre,
  In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not so happy in heaven,
  Went envying her and me.
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know)
  In this kingdom by the sea,
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
  Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
  Of those who were older than we,
  Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
  Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
  Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
  Of the beautiful Annabel Lee,
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
  Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.
And so, all the night-tide I lie down by the side
Of my darling, my darling, my life, and my bride,
  In her sepulchre there by the sea,
  In her tomb by the sounding sea.

L'INCONNU.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

IS thy name May, maiden fair?
  Such should, methinks, its music be;
The sweetest name that mortals bear
  Were best befitting thee;
And she to whom it once was given
Was half of earth and half of heaven.

I hear thy voice, I see thy smile,
I look upon thy folded hair;
Ah! while we dream not they beguile,
Our hearts are in the snare;
And she, who chains a wood-bird's wing,
Must start not if her captive sing.

So lady, take the leaf that falls,
To all but thee unseen, unknown;
When evening shades thy silent walls,
Then read it all alone;
In stillness read, in darkness seal,
Forget, despise, but not reveal.

LOVE-LILY.

BY DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

BETWEEN the hands, between the brows,
Between the lips of Love-Lily,
A spirit is born whose birth endows
My blood with fire to burn through me;
Who breathes upon my gazing eyes,
Who laughs and murmurs in mine ear,
At whose least touch my color flies,
And whom my life grows faint to hear.

Within the voice, within the heart,
Within the mind of Love-Lily,
A spirit is born who lifts apart
His tremulous wings and looks at me;
Who on my mouth his finger lays,
And shows, while whispering lutes confer,

That Eden of Love's watered ways
  Whose winds and spirits worship her.

Brows, hands, and lips, heart, mind, and voice,
  Kisses and words of Love-Lily—
Oh! bid me with your joy rejoice
  Till riotous longing rest in me!
Ah! let not hope be still distraught,
  But find in her its gracious goal,
Whose speech Truth knows not from her thought,
  Nor Love her body from her soul.

EVELYN HOPE.

BY ROBERT BROWNING.

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead!
  Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;
  She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die, too, in the glass.
  Little has yet been changed, I think;
The shutters are shut—no light may pass,
  Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
  Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name—
It was not her time to love; beside,
  Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares;
  And now was quiet, now astir—
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,
  And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?
What! your soul was pure and true;
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew;
And just because I was thrice as old,
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow-mortals—naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love;
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed, it may be, for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few;
Much is to learn and much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come—at last it will—
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant, I shall say,
In the lower earth—in the years long still—
That body and soul so gay?
Why your hair was amber I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red,
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived, I shall say, so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
Yet one thing—one—in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me—

And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while;
My heart seemed full as it could hold—
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.
So, hush! I will give you this leaf to keep;
See, I shut it inside the sweet, cold hand.
There, that is our secret! go to sleep;
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

LOVE IN THE VALLEY.

BY GEORGE MEREDITH.

UNDER yonder beech-tree standing on the greensward,
Couched with her arms behind her little head,
Her knees folded up, and her tresses on her bosom,
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.
Had I the heart to slide one arm beneath her!
Press her dreaming lips as her waist I folded slow,
Waking on the instant she could not but embrace me—
Ah! would she hold me, and never let me go?

Shy as the squirrel, and wayward as the swallow;
Swift as the swallow when, athwart the western flood,
Circleting the surface, he meets his mirrored winglets,
Is that dear one in her maiden bud.
Shy as the squirrel whose nest is in the pine-tops;
Gentle—ah! that she were jealous—as the dove!
Full of all the wildness of the woodland creatures,
Happy in herself is the maiden that I love!

What can have taught her distrust of all I tell her?
Can she truly doubt me when looking on my brows?
Nature never teaches distrust of tender love-tales;
What can have taught her distrust of all my vows?
No, she does not doubt me! on a dewy eve-tide,
Whispering together beneath the listening moon,
I prayed till her cheek flushed, implored till she faltered—
Fluttered to my bosom—ah! to fly away so soon!

When her mother tends her before the laughing mirror,
Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,
Often she thinks—were this wild thing wedded,
I should have more love, and much less care.
When her mother tends her before the bashful mirror,
Loosening her laces, combing down her curls,
Often she thinks—were this wild thing wedded,
I should lose but one for so many boys and girls.

Clambering roses peep into her chamber,
Jasmine and woodbine breathe sweet, sweet;
White-necked swallows, twittering of summer,
Fill her with balm and nested peace from head to feet.
Ah! will the rose-bough see her lying lonely,
When the petals fall and fierce bloom is on the leaves?
Will the autumn garners see her still ungathered,
When the fickle swallows forsake the weeping eaves?

Comes a sudden question—should a strange hand pluck her!
Oh! what an anguish smites me at the thought!
Should some idle lordling bribe her mind with jewels!
Can such beauty ever thus be bought?
Sometimes the huntsmen, prancing down the valley,
Eye the village lasses, full of sprightly mirth;

They see, as I see, mine is the fairest!
Would she were older and could read my worth!

Are there not sweet maidens, if she still deny me?
Show the bridal heavens but one bright star?
Wherefore thus then do I chase a shadow,
Clattering one note like a brown eve-jar?
So I rhyme and reason till she darts before me—
Through the milky meadows from flower to flower she flies,
Sunning her sweet palms to shade her dazzled eyelids
From the golden love that looks too eager in her eyes.

When at dawn she wakens, and her fair face gazes
Out on the weather through the window-panes,
Beauteous she looks! like a white water-lily
Bursting out of bud on the rippled river plains.
When from bed she rises, clothed from neck to ankle
In her long night-gown, sweet as boughs of May,
Beauteous she looks! like a tall garden lily,
Pure from the night and perfect for the day!

Happy, happy time, when the gray star twinkles
Over the fields all fresh with bloomy dew;
When the cold-cheeked dawn grows ruddy up the twilight,
And the gold sun wakes and weds her in the blue.
Then when my darling tempts the early breezes,
She the only star that dies not with the dark!
Powerless to speak all the ardor of my passion,
I catch her little hand as we listen to the lark.

Shall the birds in vain then valentine their sweethearts?
Season after season tell a fruitless tale?
Will not the virgin listen to their voices?

Take the honeyed meaning, wear the bridal veil?
Fears she frosts of winter, fears she the bare branches?
Waits she the garlands of spring for her dower?
Is she a nightingale that will not be nested
Till the April woodland has built her bridal bower?

Then come, merry April, with all thy birds and beauties!
With thy crescent brows and thy flowery, showery glee;
With thy budding leafage and fresh green pastures;
And may thy lustrous crescent grow a honeymoon for me!
Come, merry month of the cuckoo and the violet!
Come, weeping loveliness in all thy blue delight!
Lo! the nest is ready, let me not languish longer!
Bring her to my arms on the first May night.

MY DAY AND NIGHT.

RONDEAU REDOUBLÉ.

BY JOHN PAYNE.

MY day and night are in my lady's hand;
I have no other sunrise than her sight:
For me her favor glorifies the land;
Her anger darkens all the cheerful light;
Her face is fairer than the hawthorn white,
When all a-flower in May the hedgerows stand;
Whilst she is kind, I know of none affright;
My day and night are in my lady's hand.

All heaven in her glorious eye is spanned;
Her smile is softer than the summer night;
Gladder than daybreak, on the Faery strand;
I have no other sunrise than her sight.

Her silver speech is like the singing flight
  Of runnels rippling o'er the jeweled sand,
Her kiss a dream of delicate delight;
  For me her favor glorifies the land.

What if the Winter slay the Summer bland!
  The gold sun in her hair burns ever bright:
If she be sad, straightway all joy is banned;
  Her anger darkens all the cheerful light.

Come weal or woe, I am my lady's knight,
  And in her service every ill withstand;
Love is my lord, in all the world's despite,
  And holdeth in the hollow of her hand
    My day and night.

JANETTE'S HAIR.

BY CHARLES GRAHAM HALPINE.

"OH, loosen the snood that you wear, Janette,
  Let me tangle a hand in your hair—my pet";
For the world has to me no daintier sight
  Than your brown hair veiling your shoulder white.

It was brown with a golden gloss, Janette;
It was finer than silk of the floss—my pet;
'Twas a beautiful mist, falling down to your wrist,
'Twas a thing to be braided, and jeweled, and kissed—
  'Twas the loveliest hair in the world—my pet.

My arm was the arm of a clown, Janette,
It was sinewy, bristled, and brown—my pet;

But warmly and softly it loved to caress
Your round white neck and your wealth of tress,
  Your beautiful plenty of hair—my pet.

Your eyes had a swimming glory, Janette,
Revealing the old, dear story—my pet;
They were gray, with that chastened tinge of the sky
When the trout leaps quickest to seek the fly,
  And they matched with your golden hair—my pet.

Your lips—but I have no words, Janette—
They were fresh as the twitter of birds—my pet,
When the spring is young, and roses are wet,
With the dew-drops on each red blossom set,
  And they suited your gold-brown hair—my pet.

Oh, you tangled my life in your hair, Janette,
'Twas a silken and golden snare—my pet;
But so gentle the bondage, my soul did implore
The right to continue your slave evermore,
  With my fingers enmeshed in your hair—my pet.

Then ever I dream what you were, Janette,
With your lips and your eyes and your hair—my pet;
In the darkness of desolate years I moan,
And my tears fall bitterly over the stone
  That covers your golden hair—my pet.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

BY RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

ENGLAND, if Time from out the Book of Fame
Should blot the desperate valor of thy men

In the Crimea, an Englishwoman's name,
As sweet as ever came from poet's pen,
Would still defy him—Florence Nightingale!
Honor to that fair girl, whose pitying heart
Led her across the sea, to ease the smart
Of soldier wounds, and hush the soldier's wail.
Men can be great when great occasions call:
In little duties women find their spheres—
The narrow cares that cluster round the hearth;
But this dear woman wipes a woman's tears,
And wears the crown of womanhood for all.
Happy the land that gave such goodness birth!

AT HER WINDOW.

BY FREDERICK LOCKER.

BEATING heart! we come again
Where my love reposes;
There is Mabel's window-pane—
There are Mabel's roses.

Is she nested? Does she kneel
In the twilight stilly,
Lily-clad from throat to heel,
She, my virgin lily?

Soon the wan, the wistful stars,
Fading, will forsake her;
Elves of light, on beamy bars,
Whisper then, and wake her.

Let the friendly pebble plead
At the flowery grating;

If she hear me, will she heed?
Mabel, I am waiting.

Mabel will be decked anon,
Zoned in bride's apparel;
Happy zone! oh, hark to yon
Passion-shaken carol.

Sing thy song, thou trancèd thrush,
Pipe thy best, thy clearest;
Hush, her lattice moves, O hush—
Dearest Mabel!—dearest.

A PASTORAL.

BY THEOPHILE MARZIALS.

FLOWER of the medlar,
Crimson of the quince,
I saw her at the blossom-time,
And loved her ever since!
She swept the draughty pleasance,
The blooms had left the trees,
The whilst the birds sang canticles
In cheery symphonies.

Whiteness of the white rose,
Redness of the red,
She went to cut the blush rose-buds
To tie at the altar-head;
And some she laid in her bosom,
And some around her brows,
And as she passed, the lily-heads
All becked and made their bows.

Scarlet of the poppy,
  Yellow of the corn,
The men were at the garnering
  A-shouting in the morn;
I chased her to a pippin-tree—
  The waking birds all whist—
And oh, it was the sweetest kiss
  That I have ever kissed.

Marjorie, mint, and violets
  A-drying round us set,
'Twas all done in the faïence-room
  A-spicing marmalet;
On one tile was a satyr,
  On one a nymph at bay,
Methinks the birds will scarce be home
  To wake our wedding-day!

THE BRIGHT LITTLE GIRL.

BY WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

HER blue eyes they beam and they twinkle,
  Her lips have made smiling more fair;
On cheek and on brow there's no wrinkle,
  But thousands of curls in her hair.

She's little—you don't wish her taller;
  Just half through the teens is her age;
And baby or lady to call her,
  Were something to puzzle a sage!

Her walk is far better than dancing;
  She speaks as another might sing;

And all by an innocent chancing,
Like lambkins and birds in the spring.

Unskilled in the airs of the city,
She's perfect in natural grace;
She's gentle, and truthful, and witty,
And ne'er spends a thought on her face.

Her face, with the fine glow that's in it,
As fresh as an apple-tree bloom—
And oh! when she comes, in a minute,
Like sunbeams, she brightens the room.

As taking in mind as in feature,
How many will sigh for her sake!
—I wonder, the sweet little creature,
What sort of a wife she would make?

VIOLET EYES.

BY EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

ONE can never quite forget
Eyes like yours, May Margaret,
Eyes of dewy violet!
Nothing like them, Margaret,
Save the blossoms newly born
Of the May and of the morn.

Oft my memory wanders back
To those burning eyes and black,
Whose heat-lightnings once could move
Me to passion, not to love;

Longer in my heart of hearts
Linger those disguisèd arts,
Which, betimes, a hazel pair
Used upon me unaware;
And the wise and tender gray—
Eyes wherewith a saint might pray—
Speak of pledges that endure,
And of faith and vigils pure;
But for him who fain would know
All the fire the first can show,
All the art, or friendship fast,
Of the second and the last—
And would gain a sweeter worth,
Part of heaven, part of earth—
He these mingled rays can find
In but one immortal kind:
In those eyes of violet,
In *your* eyes, May Margaret!

THE SUNSHINE OF THINE EYES.

BY GEORGE P. LATHROP.

THE sunshine of thine eyes,
(O still, celestial beam!)
Whatever it touches it fills
With the life of its lambent gleam.

The sunshine of thine eyes,
Oh, let it fall on me!
Though I be but a mote of the air,
I could turn to gold for thee!

THE BLUSH.

BY CHARLES DE KAY.

IF fragrances were colors, I would liken
A blush that deepens in her thoughtful face
To that aroma which pervades the place
Where woodmen cedars to the heart have stricken;
If tastes were hues, the blissful dye I'd trace
In upland strawberries, or winter-green;
If sound, why then, to shy and mellow bass
Of mountain-thrushes, heard, yet seldom seen.
Or say that hues are felt: then it would seem
Most like to cobwebs borne on southern gales
Against a spray of jasmine. But the glow
Itself is found where sweet-brier petals gleam
Through tenderest hoar-frost, or upon the snow
Of steadfast hills when shadows brim the vales.

SEVENTH EVENING

SEVENTH EVENING.

The Poets have much glorified Woman in Many Ways, yet never is their Song sweeter than when depicting her Softer Charms as the Angel of Home.

THE WIFE.

BY JAMES SHIRLEY.

A WIFE'S a man's best piece; who till he marries
Wants making up; she is the shrine to which
Nature doth send us forth on pilgrimage;
She was a scion taken from that tree,
Into which, if she has no second grafting,
The world can have no fruit; she is man's
Arithmetic, which teaches him to number
And multiply himself in his own children;
She is the good man's Paradise, and the bad's
First step to Heaven, a treasure which, who wants
Can not be trusted to posterity,
Nor pay his own debts; she is a golden sentence,
Writ by our Maker, which the angels may
Discourse of, only man know how to use,
And none but devils violate.

HAPPINESS OF MARRIED LIFE.

BY THOMAS MIDDLETON.

HOW near am I now to a happiness
That earth exceeds not! not another like it:
The treasures of the deep are not so precious,
As are the concealed comforts of a man
Locked up in woman's love. I scent the air
Of blessings when I come but near the house.
What a delicious breath marriage sends forth!
The violet bed's not sweeter. Honest wedlock
Is like a banqueting-house built in a garden,
On which the spring's chaste flowers take delight
To cast their modest odors; when base lust,
With all her powders, paintings, and best pride,
Is but a fair house built by a ditch-side.
Now for a welcome,
Able to draw men's envies upon man;
A kiss now that will hang upon my lip
As sweet as morning-dew upon a rose,
And full as long!

ON THE COUNTESS OF ABINGDON.

BY JOHN DRYDEN.

NO single virtue we could most commend,
Whether the wife, the mother, or the friend;
For she was all, in that supreme degree,
That as no one prevailed, so all was she.
The several parts lay hidden in the piece;
The occasion but exerted that, or this.

A wife as tender, and as true withal,
As the first woman was before her fall:
Made for the man, of whom she was a part;
Made to attract his eyes, and keep his heart.
A second Eve, but by no crime accursed;
As beauteous, not as brittle, as the first.
Had she been first, still Paradise had been,
And death had found no entrance by her sin.
So she not only had preserved from ill
Her sex and ours, but lived their pattern still.

THE RURAL MAID.

FROM "RURAL SPORTS," BY JOHN GAY.

WHAT happiness the rural maid attends,
In cheerful labor while each day she spends!
She gratefully receives what Heaven has sent,
And, rich in poverty, enjoys content.
(Such happiness, and such unblemished fame,
Ne'er glad the bosom of the courtly dame):
She never feels the spleen's imagined pains,
Nor melancholy stagnates in her veins;
She never loses life in thoughtless ease,
Nor on the velvet couch invites disease;
Her home-spun dress in simple neatness lies,
And for no glaring equipage she sighs:
Her reputation, which is all her boast,
In a malicious visit ne'er was lost;
No midnight masquerade her beauty wears,
And health, not paint, the fading bloom repairs.
If love's soft passion in her bosom reign,
An equal passion warms her happy swain;

No home-bred jars her quiet state control,
Nor watchful jealousy torments her soul;
With secret joy she sees her little race
Hang on her breast, and her small cottage grace;
The fleecy ball their busy fingers cull,
Or from the spindle draw the lengthening wool:
Thus flow her hours with constant peace of mind,
Till age the latest thread of life unwind.

TO MRS. UNWIN.

BY WILLIAM COWPER.

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from Heaven as some have feigned they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things;
That, ere through age or woe I shut my wings,
I may record thy worth with honor due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings.
But thou hast little need. There is a book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright!
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING.

BY ROBERT BURNS.

SHE is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,

She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And niest my heart I'll wear her,
For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

The warld's wrack we share o't,
The warstle and the care o't;
Wi' her I'll blithly bear it,
And think my lot divine.

A PORTRAIT.

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

SHE was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveler betwixt life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill,
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

IF THOU WERT BY MY SIDE.

LINES WRITTEN TO HIS WIFE WHILE ON A VISIT TO UPPER INDIA.

BY REGINALD HEBER.

IF thou wert by my side, my love,
How fast would evening fail
In green Bengala's palmy grove
Listening the nightingale!

If thou, my love, wert by my side,
My babies at my knee,
How gayly would our pinnace glide
O'er Gunga's mimic sea!

I miss thee at the dawning gray
When, on our deck reclined,
In careless ease my limbs I lay,
And woo the cooler wind.

I miss thee when by Gunga's stream
My twilight steps I guide,
But most beneath the lamp's pale beam
I miss thee from my side.

I spread my books, my pencil try,
The lingering noon to cheer,
But miss thy kind, approving eye,
Thy meek, attentive ear.

But when at morn and eve the star
Beholds me on my knee,
I feel, though thou art distant far,
Thy prayers ascend for me.

Then on! then on! where duty leads,
My course be onward still;
On broad Hindostan's sultry meads,
O'er black Almorah's hill.

That course nor Delhi's kingly gates,
Nor mild Malwah detain;
For sweet the bliss us both awaits
By yonder Western main.

Thy towers, Bombay, gleam bright, they say,
Across the dark blue sea;
But never were hearts so light and gay
As then shall meet in thee.

FLOWER OF MY COLD AND DARKENED YEAR.

BY THOMAS KIBBLE HERVEY.

FLOWER of my cold and darkened year!
Sweet fount amid my spirit's dearth!
Be near me with the smiles that cheer
The happy home and quiet hearth;
That still 'mid winter and 'mid night,
Like fairies play their sunny part,
To turn the darkness into light,
And make it summer in the heart!

What though my early hopes have flown,
Like Noah's bird that came not back,
And many a faded leaf has strown,
All—all too soon my summer track;
My heart has treasures of its own,
Shrines on which ruin can not fall,
And cherished there, *thy* look and tone
Are birds and flowers, and hopes and all!

Oh, blessed time of smiles and tears—
Ere smiles or tears are mournful things—
Of hopes, ere hopes are born with fears—
And wishes—that have all got wings!
Oh, could I tread again youth's track,
With thee—belovèd as thou art!

But who shall bring the shadow back,
Upon the dial of my heart!

Forward, like rivers to the main,
Time passes on—forever on!—
The moon shall never pause again
Upon the vale of Ajalon!—
The sun comes o'er the eastern hill,
On Gideon—as in days gone by,
But that high voice has long been still
That bade him linger in the sky!

Yet, thou hast been to me a beam,
Pure as that bright and angel form
That stood beside the troubled stream,
And gathered healing *from its storm!*
Thy love—when all was strife around—
Like music sung my soul to rest,
And thou hast fondly sought—and found
A thousand fountains in my breast!

Oh—for the bloom that thou hast shed,
Along my wasted breast and brow—
May flowers spring up beneath *thy* tread,
And make thy life-path bright as now!
Still may thy fancy daily fleet,
As here 'mid glad and happy themes,
And visions—sweet, as thou art sweet—
Come gliding to thy nightly dreams!

May mercy shield thy breast and brain,
(Descending like a gentle dew,)
Alike from grief's and pleasure's pain,
—For Pleasure has her poisons too!—

Bliss—like the spirit's flaming sword—
  Consuming from its very light,
And hopes that—like the prophet's gourd—
  Grow up to perish in a night!

May years pass o'er thee like the breeze
  That sweeps along a spicy vale,
That bows, but will not break, the trees,
  And draws fresh perfume with each gale!
And, when thy wintry day draws in,
  Light—precious as thyself—be given,
To cheer thee through this darker scene,
  And point thee to thy native heaven!

CHARACTER OF A WIFE.

FROM "PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE," BY SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

SHE was a creature framed by love divine
  For mortal love to musen life away
In pondering her perfections; so unmoved
Amidst the world's contentions, if they touched
No vital chord, nor troubled what she loved,
Philosophy might look her in the face;
And, like a hermit stooping to the well
That yields him sweet refreshment, might therein
See but his own serenity reflected,
With a more heavenly tenderness of blue!
Yet, whilst the world's ambitions, empty cares,
Its small disquietude, and insect stings
Disturbed her never, she was one made up
Of feminine affections, and her life
Was one full stream of love from fount to sea.

THE POET'S SONG TO HIS WIFE.

BY BARRY CORNWALL.

HOW many summers, love,
Have I been thine?
How many days, thou dove,
Hast thou been mine?
Time, like the wingèd wind
When 't bends the flowers,
Hath left no mark behind,
To count the hours!

Some weight of thought, though loth,
On thee he leaves;
Some lines of care round both
Perhaps he weaves;
Some fears—a soft regret
For joys scarce known;
Sweet looks we half forget—
All else is flown!

Ah! with what thankless heart
I mourn and sing!
Look, where our children start,
Like sudden spring!
With tongues all sweet and low,
Like a pleasant rhyme,
They tell how much I owe
To thee and time!

AN ANGEL IN THE HOUSE.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

HOW sweet it were, if without feeble fright,
Or dying of the dreadful beauteous sight,
An angel came to us, and we could bear
To see him issue from the silent air
At evening in our room, and bend on ours
His divine eyes, and bring us from his bowers
News of dear friends, and children who have never
Been dead indeed—as we shall know for ever.
Alas! we think not what we daily see
About our hearths—angels, that are to be,
Or may be if they will, and we prepare
Their souls and ours to meet in happy air;
A child, a friend, a wife whose soft heart sings
In unison with ours, breeding its future wings.

WIFIE, COME HAME.

BY JAMES BALLANTYNE.

WIFIE, come hame,
My couthie wee dame!
Oh, but ye're far awa',
Wifie, come hame!
Come wi' the young bloom o' morn on thy broo,
Come wi' the lown star o' love in thine ee,
Come wi' the red cherries ripe on thy mou',
A' glist wi' balm, like the dew on the lea.
Come wi' the gowd tassels fringin' thy hair,
Come wi' thy rose cheeks a' dimpled wi' glee,

Come wi' thy wee step, and wifie-like air—
Oh, quickly come, and shed blessings on me!

Wifie, come hame,
My couthie wee dame!
Oh, my heart wearies sair,
Wifie, come hame!

Come wi' our love-pledge, our dear little dawtie,
Clasping my neck round, an' clamb'rin' my knee;
Come let me nestle and press the wee pettie,
Gazing on ilka sweet feature o' thee.
Oh, but the house is a cauld hame without ye,
Lanely and eerie's the life that I dree;
Oh, come awa', an' I'll dance round about ye,
Ye'll ne'er again win frae my arms till I dee.

THE POET'S BRIDAL-DAY SONG.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

OH! my love's like the steadfast sun,
Or streams that deepen as they run:
Nor hoary hairs, nor forty years,
Nor moments between sighs and fears;
Nor nights of thought, nor days of pain,
Nor dreams of glory dreamed in vain,
Nor mirth, nor sweetest song which flows
To sober joys and soften woes,
Can make my heart or fancy flee
One moment, my sweet wife, from thee.

Even while I muse, I see thee sit
In maiden bloom and matron wit;

Fair, gentle, as when first I sued
Ye seem, but of sedater mood:
Yet my heart leaps as fond for thee
As when, beneath Arbigland tree,
We stayed and wooed, and thought the moon
Set on the sea an hour too soon;
Or lingered 'mid the falling dew,
When looks were fond, and words were few.

Though I see smiling at thy feet
Five sons and ae fair daughter sweet;
And time, and care, and birth-time woes
Have dimmed thine eye, and touched thy rose;
To thee, and thoughts of thee, belong
Whate'er charms me of tale or song;
When words come down like dews unsought,
With gleams of deep enthusiast thought;
And fancy in her heaven flies free—
They come, my love, they come from thee.

Oh, when more thought we gave of old
To silver than some give to gold,
'Twas sweet to sit and ponder o'er
How we should deck our humble bower;
'Twas sweet to pull, in hope, with thee,
The golden fruit of fortune's tree;
And sweeter still, to choose and twine
A garland for that brow of thine;
A song-wreath which may grace my Jean,
While rivers flow, and woods grow green.

At times there come, as come there ought,
Grave moments of sedater thought—

When fortune frowns, nor lends our night
One gleam of her inconstant light;
And hope, that decks the peasant's bower,
Shines like a rainbow through the shower:
Oh, then I see, while seated nigh,
A mother's heart shine in thine eye;
And proud resolve, and purpose meek,
Speak of thee more than words can speak;
I think this wedded wife of mine
The best of all that's not divine!

MAIDEN LIFE.

FROM "SNOW-BOUND," BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

. . . THE dear aunt, whose smile of cheer,
And voice in dreams, I see and hear—
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate,
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
Found peace in love's unselfishness,
And welcome whereso'er she went,
A calm and gracious element,
Whose presence seemed the sweet income
And womanly atmosphere of home—
Called up her girlhood memories,
The huskings and the apple-bees,
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
Weaving through all the poor details
And homespun warp of circumstance
A golden woof-thread of romance.
For well she kept her genial mood
And simple faith of maidenhood;

Before her still a cloud-land lay,
The mirage loomed across her way;
The morning dew, that dries so soon
With others, glistened at her noon;
Through years of toil and soil and care,
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,
All unprofaned she held apart
The virgin fancies of the heart.
Be shame to him of woman born
Who hath for such but thought of scorn.

EARLY IMPRESSIONS.

FROM "THE PRINCESS," BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

. . . From earlier than I know,
Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world,
I loved the woman: he that doth not, lives
A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,
Or pines in sad experience worse than death,
Or keeps his winged affections clipt with crime:
Yet was there one through whom I loved her, one
Not learned, save in gracious household ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
No angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
In angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the gods and men,
Who looked all native to her place, and yet
On tiptoe seemed to touch upon a sphere
Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce
Swayed to her from their orbits as they moved,
And girdled her with music. Happy he
With such a mother; faith in womankind

Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him; and though he trip and fall,
He shall not blind his soul with clay.

LOOK THROUGH MINE EYES WITH THINE.

FROM "THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER," BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

LOOK through mine eyes with thine. True wife,
Round my true heart thine arms entwine;
My other dearer life in life,
Look through my very soul with thine!
Untouched with any shade of years,
May those kind eyes forever dwell!
They have not shed a many tears,
Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their part
Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,
The still affection of the heart
Became an outward breathing type,
That into stillness passed again,
And left a want unknown before;
Although the loss that brought us pain,
That loss but made us love the more

With farther lookings on. The kiss,
The woven arms, seem but to be
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
The comfort, I have found in thee:
But that God bless thee, dear—who wrought
Two spirits to one equal mind—
With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can find.

MY LOVE.

BY GERALD MASSEY.

MY Love is true and tender,
Her eyes are rich with rest;
Her hair of dappled splendor,
The color I love best;
So sweet, so gay, so odorous warm,
She nestles here, heart-high,
A bounteous aspect, beauteous form,
But—just a wee bit sly.

My Love is no light dreamer,
A-floating with the foam;
But a brave life-sea swimmer,
With footing found in home.
My winsome wife, she's bright without,
And beautiful within;
But—I would not say quite without
The least wee touch of sin.

My Love is not an angel
In one or two small things;
But just a wifely woman
With other wants than wings.
You have some little leaven
Of earth, you darling dear!
If you were fit for heaven,
You might not nestle here.

O LAY THY HAND IN MINE, DEAR!

BY GERALD MASSEY.

O LAY thy hand in mine, dear!
We're growing old, we're growing old;
But Time hath brought no sign, dear,
That hearts grow cold, that hearts grow cold.
'Tis long, long since our new love
Made life divine, made life divine;
But age enricheth true love,
Like noble wine, like noble wine.

And lay thy cheek to mine, dear,
And take thy rest, and take thy rest;
Mine arms around thee twine, dear,
And make thy nest, and make thy nest.
A many cares are pressing
On this dear head, on this dear head;
But Sorrow's hands in blessing
Are surely laid, are surely laid.

O lean thy life on mine, dear!
'Twill shelter thee, 'twill shelter thee.
Thou wert a winsome vine, dear,
On my young tree, on my young tree:
And so, till boughs are leafless,
And song-birds flown, and song-birds flown,
We'll twine, then lay us, griefless,
Together down, together down.

WOMAN'S VOICE.

BY EDWIN ARNOLD.

NOT in the swaying of the summer trees,
When evening breezes sing their vesper hymn—
Not in the minstrel's mighty symphonies,
Nor ripples breaking on the river's brim,
Is earth's best music; these may move awhile
High thoughts in happy hearts, and carking cares beguile.

But even as the swallow's silken wings,
Skimming the water of the sleeping lake,
Stir the still silver with a hundred rings—
So doth one sound the sleeping spirit wake
To brave the danger, and to bear the harm—
A low and gentle voice—dear woman's chiefest charm.

An excellent thing it is, and ever lent
To truth and love, and meekness; they who own
This gift, by the all-gracious Giver sent,
Ever by quiet step and smile are known;
By kind eyes that have wept, hearts that have sorrowed—
By patience never tired, from their own trials borrowed.

An excellent thing it is, when first in gladness
A mother looks into her infant's eyes,
Smiles to its smiles, and saddens to its sadness,
Pales at its paleness, sorrows at its cries;
Its food and sleep, and smiles and little joys—
All these come ever blent with one low gentle voice.

An excellent thing it is when life is leaving,
Leaving with gloom and gladness, joys and cares,

The strong heart failing, and the high soul grieving
With strangest thoughts, and with unwonted fears;
Then, then a woman's low, soft sympathy
Comes like an angel's voice to teach us how to die.

But a most excellent thing it is in youth,
When the fond lover hears the loved one's tone,
That fears, but longs, to syllable the truth—
How their two hearts are one, and she his own;
It makes sweet human music—oh! the spells
That haunt the trembling tale a bright-eyed maiden tells!

MY LOVE.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

NOT as all other women are
Is she that to my soul is dear;
Her glorious fancies come from far,
Beneath the silver evening-star,
And yet her heart is ever near.

Great feelings hath she of her own,
Which lesser souls may never know;
God giveth them to her alone,
And sweet they are as any tone
Wherewith the wind may choose to blow.

Yet in herself she dwelleth not,
Although no home were half so fair;
No simplest duty is forgot;
Life hath no dim and lowly spot
That doth not in her sunshine share.

She doeth little kindnesses,
  Which most leave undone, or despise;
For naught that sets one heart at ease,
And giveth happiness or peace,
  Is low-esteemèd in her eyes.

She hath no scorn of common things:
  And, though she seem of other birth,
Round us her heart entwines and clings,
And patiently she folds her wings
  To tread the humble paths of earth.

Blessing she is; God made her so;
  And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her noiseless as the snow;
Nor hath she ever chanced to know
  That aught were easier than to bless.

She is most fair, and thereunto
  Her life doth rightly harmonize;
Feeling or thought that was not true
Ne'er made less beautiful the blue
  Unclouded heaven of her eyes.

She is a woman—one in whom
  The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
  For many blights and many tears.

I love her with a love as still
  As a broad river's peaceful might,
Which, by high tower and lowly mill,

Goes wandering at its own will,
And yet doth ever flow aright.

And, on its full, deep breast serene,
Like quiet isles my duties lie;
It flows around them and between,
And makes them fresh and fair and green—
Sweet homes wherein to live and die.

HERMIONÉ.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.

WHEREVER I wander, up and about,
This is the puzzle I can't make out—
Because I care little for books, no doubt:

I have a wife, and she is wise,
Deep in philosophy, strong in Greek;
Spectacles shadow her pretty eyes,
Coteries rustle to hear her speak;
She writes a little—for love, not fame;
Has published a book with a dreary name;
And yet (God bless her!) is mild and meek.
And how I happened to woo and wed
A wife so pretty and wise withal,
Is part of the puzzle that fills my head—
Plagues me at day-time, racks me in bed,
Haunts me, and makes me appear so small.
The only answer that I can see
Is—I could not have married Hermioné
(That is her fine wise name), but she
Stooped in her wisdom and married me.

For I am a fellow of no degree,
Given to romping and jollity;
The Latin they thrashed into me at school
  The world and its fights have thrashed away:
At figures alone I am no fool,
  And in city circles I say my say.
But I am a dunce at twenty-nine,
And the kind of study that I think fine
Is a chapter of Dickens, a sheet of the *Times*,
  When I lounge, after work, in my easy-chair;
Punch for humor, and Praed for rhymes,
  And the butterfly *mots* blown here and there
  By the idle breath of the social air.
A little French is my only gift,
Wherewith at times I can make a shift,
Guessing at meanings, to flutter over
A filigree tale in a paper cover.

Hermioné, my Hermioné!
What could your wisdom perceive in me?
And, Hermioné, my Hermioné!
How does it happen at all that we
Love one another so utterly?
Well, I have a bright-eyed boy of two,
  A darling, who cries with lung and tongue about:
As fine a fellow, I swear to you,
  As ever poet of sentiment sung about!
And my lady-wife with the serious eyes
  Brightens and lightens when he is nigh,
And looks, although she is deep and wise,
  As foolish and happy as he or I!
And I have the courage just then, you see,
To kiss the lips of Hermioné—

Those learnèd lips that the learnèd praise—
And to clasp her close as in sillier days;
To talk and joke in a frolic vein;
  To tell her my stories of things and men;
And it never strikes me that I am profane,
For she laughs and blushes, and kisses again!
  And presto! fly goes her wisdom then!
The boy claps hands, and is up on her breast,
  Roaring to see her so bright with mirth;
And I know she deems me (oh the jest!)
  The cleverest fellow on all the earth!

And Hermioné, my Hermioné,
Nurses her boy and defers to me;
Does not seem to see I'm small—
Even to think me a dunce at all!
And wherever I wander, up and about,
Here is the puzzle I can't make out:
That Hermioné, my Hermioné,
In spite of her Greek and philosophy,
When sporting at night with her boy and me,
Seems sweeter and wiser, I assever—
Sweeter and wiser, and far more clever,
And makes me feel more foolish than ever,
Through her childish, girlish, joyous grace,
And the silly pride in her learnèd face!

That is the puzzle I can't make out—
Because I care little for books, no doubt;
But the puzzle is pleasant, I know not why,
  For, whenever I think of it, night or morn,
I thank my God she is wise, and I
  The happiest fool that was ever born.

LAURA, MY DARLING.

BY EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

LAURA, my darling, the roses have blushed
At the kiss of the dew, and our chamber is hushed;
Our murmuring babe to your bosom has clung,
And hears in his slumber the song that you sung;
I watch you asleep with your arms round him thrown,
Your links of dark tresses wound in with his own,
And the wife is as dear as the gentle young bride
Of the hour when you first, darling, came to my side.

Laura, my darling, our sail down the stream
Of youth's summers and winters has been like a dream;
Years have but rounded your womanly grace,
And added their spell to the light of your face;
Your soul is the same as though part were not given
To the two, like yourself, sent to bless me from heaven—
Dear lives, springing forth from the life of my life,
To make you more near, darling, mother and wife!

Laura, my darling, there's hazel-eyed Fred,
Asleep in his own tiny cot by the bed,
And little King Arthur, whose curls have the art
Of winding their tendrils so close round my heart;
Yet fairer than either, and dearer than both,
Is the true one who gave me in girlhood her troth;
For we, when we mated for evil and good—
What were we, darling, but babes in the wood?

Laura, my darling, the years which have flown
Brought few of the prizes I pledged to my own;

I said that no sorrow should roughen her way—
Her life should be cloudless, a long summer's day.
Shadow and sunshine, thistles and flowers,
Which of the two, darling, most have been ours?
Yet to-night, by the smile on your lips, I can see
You are dreaming of me, darling, dreaming of me.

Laura, my darling, the stars, that we knew
In our youth, are still shining as tender and true;
The midnight is sounding its slumberous bell,
And I come to the one who has loved me so well.
Wake, darling, wake, for my vigil is done;
What shall dissever our lives which are one?
Say, while the rose listens under her breath,
"Naught until death, darling, naught until death!"

THE BONNY BROWN HAND.

BY PAUL H. HAYNE.

I.

OH, drearily, how drearily, the somber eve comes down!
And wearily, how wearily, the seaward breezes blow!
But place your little hand in mine—so dainty, yet so brown!
For household toil hath worn away its rosy-tinted snow;
But I fold it, wife, the nearer,
And I feel, my love, 'tis dearer
Than all dear things of earth,
As I watch the pensive gloaming,
And my wild thoughts cease from roaming,
And bird-like furl their pinions close beside our peaceful hearth:
Then rest your little hand in mine, while twilight shimmers down—

That little hand, that fervent hand, that hand of bonny brown—
The hand that holds an honest heart, and rules a happy hearth.

II.

Oh, merrily, how merrily, our children's voices rise!
And cheerily, how cheerily, their tiny footsteps fall!
But, hand, you must not stir awhile, for there our nestling lies,
Snug in the cradle at your side, the loveliest far of all;
And she looks so arch and airy,
So softly pure a fairy—
She scarce seems bound to earth;
And her dimpled mouth keeps smiling,
As at some child-fay's beguiling,
Who flies from Ariel realms to light her slumbers on the hearth.
Ha, little hand, you yearn to move, and smooth the bright locks down!
But, little hand—but, trembling hand—but, hand of bonny brown,
Stay, stay with me!—she will not flee, our birdling on the hearth.

III.

Oh, flittingly, how flittingly, the parlor-shadows thrill,
As wittingly, half wittingly, they seem to pulse and pass!
And solemn sounds are on the wind that sweeps the haunted hill,
And murmurs of a ghostly breath from out the grave-yard grass.
Let me feel your glowing fingers
In a clasp that warms and lingers
With the full, fond love of earth,
Till the joy of love's completeness
In this flush of fireside sweetness
Shall brim our hearts with spirit-wine, outpoured beside the hearth.
So steal your little hand in mine, while twilight falters down—
That little hand, that fervent hand, that hand of bonny brown—
The hand which points the path to heaven, yet makes a heaven of earth.

HOMEWARD SERENELY SHE WALKED WITH GOD'S BENEDICTION VPON HER

EIGHTH EVENING.

Now appeareth Woman as the Heroine of Romantic Story, in which Character the Poets of all Lands have bedight her with much Splendor.

THE HEROINES OF SHAKESPEARE.

(Woman as the heroine of romance has filled all legendary story, all historic periods, and a large place in every literature. But, rich as the annals are, some of the noblest figures do not appear in poetry in a manner to admit of quotation. In narrative poems there are frequently glowing and particular descriptions, but in dramatic literature women are generally revealed in the true spirit of dramatic art, by what they say and do, rather than by definite delineation. Nevertheless, selections of poetry in honor of women that neglected the heroines of Shakespeare would fairly challenge censure, for where in literature is there so exquisite and admirable a sisterhood? What creation in poetry transcends the womanly loveliness of Imogen? Where does the large nobility of woman show fairer than in Portia? Where can we find such rare blending of brilliant imagination and profound feeling as in Rosalind? What other pastoral lass is so sweet of the meadows as Perdita? But, admirable as these women are, it is not easy to represent them by definite quotation. With some of Shakespeare's heroines, indeed, there is nothing that serves our purpose; but all that comes within the scope of our plan is here presented.)

JULIET.

("*Romeo and Juliet.*")

ROMEO. But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks!
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady; O! it is my love:
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks, yet she says nothing! What of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eye in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing and think it were not night.

PORTIA.

("*Merchant of Venice.*")

BASSANIO. In Belmont is a lady richly left,
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wond'rous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors: and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece.

PORTIA'S PORTRAIT.

BASSANIO. What find I here?
Fair Portia's counterfeit? What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are severed lips,
Parted with sugar breath; so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends: Here in her hairs
The painter plays the spider; and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men,
Faster than gnats in cobwebs: But her eyes—
How could he see to do them? having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,
And leave itself unfurnished: Yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprising it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance.

MIRANDA.

("*The Tempest.*")

FERDINAND. Admired Miranda!
Indeed the top of admiration; worth
What's dearest to the world! Full many a lady
I have eyed with best regard; and many a time
The harmony of their tongues hath into bondage
Brought my too diligent ear: for several virtues
Have I liked several women; never any
With so full soul, but some defect in her
Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owed,
And put it to the foil: But you, O you,
So perfect, and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best.

IMOGEN, SLEEPING.

("*Cymbeline.*")

IACHIMO. How bravely thou becom'st thy bed! fresh lily!
And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch!
'Tis her breathing that
Perfumes the chamber thus: The flame o' the taper
Bows toward her; and would under-peep her lids,
To see the inclosed lights, now canopied
Under these windows, white and azure, laced
With blue of heaven's own tinct.

ROSALIND.

("*As you Like It.*")

(*Orlando pins upon the trees in the forest of Arden verses descriptive of Rosalind.*)

FROM the east to western Ind,
No jewel is like Rosalind.
Her worth, being mounted on the wind,
Through all the world bears Rosalind.
All the pictures, fairest lined,
Are but black to Rosalind.
Let no face be kept in mind,
But the fair of Rosalind.

* * * * *

Tongues I'll hang on every tree,
That shall civil sayings show.
Some, how brief the life of man
Runs his erring pilgrimage;
That the stretching of a span
Buckles in his sum of age.
Some, of violated vows,

'Twixt the souls of friend and friend:
But upon the fairest boughs,
Or at every sentence' end,
Will I Rosalinda write;
Teaching all that read, to know
The quintessence of every sprite
Heaven would in little show.
Therefore Heaven Nature charged
That one body should be filled
With all graces wide enlarged:
Nature presently distilled
Helen's cheek, but not her heart;
Cleopatra's majesty,
Atalanta's better part,
Sad Lucretia's modesty.
Thus Rosalind of many parts
By heavenly synod was devised;
Of many faces, eyes, and hearts,
To have the touches dearest prized.

PERDITA.

("*A Winter's Tale.*")

FLORIZEL. What you do
Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,
I'd have you do it ever: when you sing,
I'd have you buy and sell so; so give alms;
Pray so; and, for the ordering your affairs,
To sing them too: When you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that; move still, still so, and own
No other function. Each your doing,

So singular in each particular,
Crowns what you are doing in the present deeds,
That all your acts are queens.

UNA.

FROM "THE FAERIE QUEEN," BY EDMUND SPENSER.

UNA AND THE RED-CROSS KNIGHT.

A GENTLE knight was pricking on the plain,
Yclad in mighty arms and silver shield,
Wherein old dints of deep wounds did remain,
The cruel marks of many a bloody field;
Yet arms till that time did he never wield;
His angry steed did chide his foaming bit,
As much disdaining to the curb to yield:
Full jolly knight he seemed, and fair did sit,
As one for knightly jousts and fierce encounters fit.

* * * * * * * *

A lovely lady rode him fair beside,
Upon a lowly ass more white than snow;
Yet she much whiter, but the same did hide
Under a veil that wimpled was full low,
And over all a black stole she did throw,
As one that inly mourned: so was she sad,
And heavy sat upon her palfrey slow;
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,
And by her in a line a milk-white lamb she led.

So pure and innocent, as that same lamb,
She was in life and every virtuous lore,
And by descent from royal lineage came

Of ancient kings and queens, that had of yore
Their scepters stretcht from east to western shore,
And all the world in their subjection held;
Till that infernal fiend with foul uproar
Forwasted all their land, and them expelled,
Whom to avenge, she had this knight from far compelled.

UNA AND THE LION.

NAUGHT is there under heaven's wide hollowness,
That moves more dear compassion of mind,
Than beauty brought t' unworthy wretchedness
Through envy's snares, or fortune's freaks unkind.
I, whether lately through her brightness blind,
Or through allegiance, and fast fealty,
Which I do owe unto all womankind,
Feel my heart perst with so great agony,
When such I see, that all for pity I could die.

And now it is impassioned so deep,
For fairest Una's sake, of whom I sing,
That my frail eyes these lines with tears do steep,
To think how she through guileful handling,
Though true as touch, though daughter of a king,
Though fair as ever living wight was fair,
Though nor in word nor deed ill meriting,
Is from her knight divorcèd in despair,
And her dew loves derived to that vile witches share.

Yet she, most faithful lady, all this while
Forsaken, woful, solitary maid,
Far from all peoples preace as in exile,
In wilderness and wasteful deserts strayed

To seek her knight; who subtilly betrayed
Through that late vision which th' enchanter wrought,
Had her abandoned; she of naught afraid,
Through woods and wasteness wide him daily sought,
Yet wishèd tidings none of him unto her brought.

One day, nigh weary of the irksome way,
From her unhasty beast she did alight;
And on the grass her dainty limbs did lay
In secret shadow, far from all men's sight;
From her fair head her fillet she undight,
And laid her stole aside. Her angel's face,
As the great eye of heaven shinèd bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortal eye behold such heavenly grace.

It fortunèd out of the thickest wood
A ramping lion rushèd suddenly,
Hunting full greedy after salvage blood.
Soon as the royal virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have at once devoured her tender corse;
But to the prey when as he drew more nigh,
His bloody rage aswagèd with remorse,
And with the sight amazed forgot his furious force.

Instead thereof, he kissed her weary feet,
And licked her lily hands with fawning tongue;
As he her wrongèd innocence did meet.
O, how can beauty master the most strong,
And simple truth subdue avenging wrong!
Whose yielded pride and proud submission,
Still dreading death, when she had markèd long,

Her heart gan melt in great compassion;
And drizzling tears did shed for pure affection.

UNA AS A BRIDE.

Then forth he called that his daughter fair,
The fairest Un', his only daughter dear,
His only daughter and his only heir;
Who forth proceeding with sad sober cheer,
As bright as doth the morning star appear
Out of the east, with flaming locks bedight,
To tell that dawning day is drawing near,
And to the world does bring long-wishèd light:
So fair and fresh that lady showed herself in sight.

So fair and fresh, as freshest flower in May;
For she had laid her mournful stole aside,
And widow-like sad wimple thrown away,
Wherewith her heavenly beauty she did hide,
Whiles on her weary journey she did ride,
And on her now a garment she did wear
All lily white, without one spot or pride,
That seemed like silk and silver woven near,
But neither silk nor silver therein did appear.

The blazing brightness of her beauty's beam,
And glorious light of her sunshiny face,
To tell, were as to strive against the stream:
My ragged rhymes are all too rude and base
Her heavenly lineaments for to enchase.
No wonder, for her own dear lovèd knight,
All were she daily with himself in place,
Did wonder much at her celestial sight:
Oft had he seen her fair, but never so fair dight.

HERO.

FROM "HERO AND LEANDER," BY CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

AT Sestos Hero dwelt; Hero the fair,
Whom young Apollo courted for her hair,
And offered as a dower his burning throne,
Where she should sit, for men to gaze upon.
The outside of her garments were of lawn,
The lining, purple silk, with gilt stars drawn;
Her wide sleeves green, and bordered with a grove,
Where Venus in her naked glory strove
To please the careless and disdainful eyes
Of proud Adonis, that before her lies;
Her kirtle blue, whereon was many a stain,
Made with the blood of wretched lovers slain.
Upon her head she wore a myrtle-wreath,
From whence her veil reached to the ground beneath;
Her veil was artificial flowers and leaves,
Whose workmanship both man and beast deceives:
Many would praise the sweet smell as she past,
When 'twas the odor which her breath forth cast;
And there for honey bees have sought in vain,
And, beat from thence, have lighted there again.
About her neck hung chains of pebble-stone,
Which lightened by her neck, like diamonds shone.
She wore no gloves; for neither sun nor wind
Would burn or parch her hands, but, to her mind,
Or warm or cool them, for they took delight
To play upon those hands, they were so white.
Buskins of shells, all silvered, usèd she,
And branched with blushing coral to the knee;
Where sparrows perched, of hollow pearl and gold,

Such as the world would wonder to behold;
Those with sweet water oft her handmaid fills,
Which, as she went, would chirrup through the bills.
Some say, for her the fairest Cupid pined,
And, looking in her face, was strooken blind.
But this is true: so like was one the other,
As he imagined Hero was his mother;
And oftentimes into her bosom flew,
About her naked neck his bare arms threw,
And laid his childish head upon her breast,
And, with still panting rock, there took his rest.
So lovely fair was Hero, Venus' nun,
As Nature wept, thinking she was undone,
Because she took more from her than she left,
And of such wondrous beauty her bereft;
Therefore, in sign her treasure suffered wrack,
Since Hero's time hath half the world been black.

EARINE.

FROM "THE SAD SHEPHERD," BY BEN JONSON.

(*Earine has been drowned in the Trent, and is mourned by Æglamour, the sad shepherd.*)

HERE she was wont to go! and here! and here!
Just where those daisies, pinks, and violets grow;
The world may find the Spring by following her,
For other print her airy steps ne'er left.
Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,
Or shake the downy bluebell from his stalk!
But like the soft west wind she shot along,
And where she went, the flowers took thickest root,
As she had sowed them with her odorous foot.

* * * * * * *

A Spring, now she is dead! of what? of thorns,
Briers, and brambles? thistles, burs, and docks?
Cold hemlock, yew? the mandrake or the box?
These may grow still; but what can spring beside?
Did not the whole earth sicken when she died!
As if then since did fall one drop of dew,
But what was wept for her? or any stalk
Did bear a flower, or any branch a bloom,
After her wreath was made! In faith, in faith,
You do not fair to put these things upon me,
Which can in no sort be! Earine,
Who had her very being, and her name,
With the first knots or buddings of the Spring.
Born with the primrose, or the violet,
Or earliest roses blown; when Cupid smiled,
And Venus led the Graces out to dance,
And all the flowers and sweets in Nature's lap
Leaped out, and made their solemn conjuration,
To last but while she lived!

EUPHRASIA.

FROM "PHILASTER," BY BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

(*Euphrasia is disguised as Bellario, a boy.*)

PHILASTER. Hunting the buck,
I found him sitting by a fountain-side,
Of which he borrowed some to quench his thirst,
And paid the nymph again as much in tears.
A garland lay him by, made by himself,
Of many several flowers, bred in the bay,
Stuck in that mystic order, that the rareness

Delighted me: but ever when he turned
His tender eyes upon them he would weep,
As if he meant to make them grow again.
Seeing such pretty helpless innocence
Dwell in his face, I asked him all his story.
He told me that his parents gentle died,
Leaving him to the mercy of the fields,
Which gave him roots, and of the crystal springs,
Which did not stop their courses, and the sun,
Which still, he thanked him, yielded him his light.
Then took he up his garland, and did show
What every flower, as country people hold,
Did signify; and how all, ordered thus,
Expressed his grief; and to my thoughts did read
The prettiest lecture of his country art
That could be wished; so that methought I could
Have studied it. I gladly entertained him,
Who was as glad to follow; and have got
The trustiest, loving'st, and the gentlest boy,
That ever master kept.

(*Euphrasia describes her passion for Philaster.*)

My father oft would speak
Your worth and virtue; and, as I did grow
More and more apprehensive, I did thirst
To see the man so praised; but yet all this
Was but a maiden-longing, to be lost
As soon as found; till, sitting in my window,
Printing my thoughts in lawn, I saw a god,
I thought—but it was you—enter our gates.
My blood flew out, and back again as fast
As I had puffed it forth and sucked it in

Like breath. Then was I called away in haste
To entertain you. Never was a man
Heaved from a sheep-cote to a scepter raised
So high in thoughts as I: you left a kiss
Upon these lips then, which I mean to keep
From you forever. I did hear you talk,
Far above singing! After you were gone,
I grew acquainted with my heart, and search
What stirred it so. Alas! I found it love;
Yet far from lust; for could I but have lived
In presence of you, I had had my end.
For this I did delude my noble father
With a feigned pilgrimage, and dressed myself
In habit of a boy; and for I knew
My birth no match for you, I was past hope
Of having you. And, understanding well
That when I made discovery of my sex,
I could not stay with you, I made a vow,
By all the most religious things a maid
Could call together, never to be known,
Whilst there was hope to hide me from men's eyes,
For other than I seemed, that I might ever
Abide with you: then sat I by the fount
Where first you took me up.

ELLEN.

FROM "THE LADY OF THE LAKE," BY SIR WALTER SCOTT

"I AM alone! my bugle-strain
May call some straggler of the train;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this falchion has been tried."

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo! forth starting at the sound,
From underneath an aged oak,
That slanted from the islet rock,
A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep,
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping-willow twig to lave,
And kiss with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
The boat had touched this silver strand,
Just as the hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the brake,
To view this lady of the lake.
The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain.
With head upraised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art,
In listening mood, she seemed to stand,
The guardian naiad of the strand.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A nymph, a naiad, or a grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,

Served too in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow;
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear.

A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed.
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care,
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confessed
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claimed a sigh,

Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion poured a prayer,
Or tale of injury called forth
Th' indignant spirit of the north.
One only passion, unrevealed,
With maiden pride the maid concealed,
Yet not less purely felt the flame—
O need I tell that passion's name!

GERTRUDE.

FROM "GERTRUDE OF WYOMING," BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

ON Susquehanna's side, fair Wyoming!
Although the wild-flower on thy ruined wall,
And roofless homes, a sad remembrance bring
Of what thy gentle people did befall;
Yet thou wert once the loveliest land of all
That see the Atlantic wave their morn restore.
Sweet land! may I thy lost delights recall,
And paint thy Gertrude in her bowers of yore,
Whose beauty was the love of Pennsylvania's shore!

The rose of England bloomed on Gertrude's cheek—
What though these shades had seen her birth, her sire
A Briton's independence taught to seek
Far Western worlds; and there his household fire
The light of social love did long inspire,
And many a halcyon day he lived to see
Unbroken but by one misfortune dire,
When fate had reft his mutual heart—but she
Was gone—and Gertrude climbed a widowed father's knee.

A loved bequest—and I may half impart—
To them that feel the strong paternal tie,
How like a new existence to his heart
That living flower uprose beneath his eye,
Dear as she was from cherub infancy,
From hours when she would round his garden play,
To time when as the ripening years went by,
Her lovely mind could culture well repay,
And more engaging grew, from pleasing day to day.

I may not paint those thousand infant charms;
(Unconscious fascination, undesigned!)
The orison repeated in his arms,
For God to bless her sire and all mankind;
The book, the bosom on his knee reclined,
Or how sweet fairy-lore he heard her con,
(The playmate ere the teacher of her mind:)
All uncompanioned else her heart had gone
Till now, in Gertrude's eyes, their ninth blue summer shone.

* * * * * * *

It seemed as if those scenes sweet influence had
On Gertrude's soul, and kindness like their own
Inspired those eyes affectionate and glad,
That seemed to love whate'er they looked upon;
Whether with Hebe's mirth her features shone,
Or if a shade more pleasing them o'ercast,
(As if for heavenly musing meant alone;)
Yet so becomingly th' expression past,
That each succeeding look was lovelier than the last.

Nor guess I, was that Pennsylvanian home,
With all its picturesque and balmy grace,

And fields that were a luxury to roam,
Lost on the soul that looked from such a face!
Enthusiast of the woods! when years apace
Had bound thy lovely waist with woman's zone,
The sunrise path, at morn, I see thee trace
To hills with high magnolia overgrown,
And joy to breathe the groves, romantic and alone.

* * * * * * *

Apart there was a deep untrodden grot,
Where oft the reading hours sweet Gertrude wore;
Tradition had not named its lonely spot;
But here (methinks) might India's sons explore
Their fathers' dust, or lift, perchance of yore,
Their voice to the Great Spirit—rocks sublime
To human art a sportive semblance bore,
And yellow lichens colored all the clime,
Like moonlight battlements, and towers decayed by time.

But high in amphitheatre above,
Gay tinted woods their massy foliage threw:
Breathed but an air of heaven, and all the grove
As if instinct with living spirit grew,
Rolling its verdant gulfs of every hue;
And now suspended was the pleasing din,
Now from a murmur faint it swelled anew,
Like the first note of organ heard within
Cathedral aisles—ere yet its symphony begin.

It was in this lone valley she would charm
The lingering noon, where flowers a couch had strown;
Her cheek reclining, and her snowy arm
On hillock by the pine-tree half o'ergrown:

And aye that volume on her lap is thrown,
Which every heart of human mold endears;
With Shakespeare's self she speaks and smiles alone,
And no intruding visitation fears,
To shame the unconscious laugh, or stop her sweetest tears.

And naught within the grove was heard or seen
But stock-doves plaining through its gloom profound,
Or winglet of the fairy humming-bird,
Like atoms of the rainbow fluttering round;
When lo! there entered to its inmost ground
A youth, the stranger of a distant land;
He was, to weet, for eastern mountains bound;
But late th' equator suns his cheek had tanned,
And California's gales his roving bosom fanned.

* * * * * * *

O Love! in such a wilderness as this,
Where transport and security entwine,
Here is the empire of thy perfect bliss,
And here thou art a god indeed divine.
Here shall no forms abridge, no hours confine,
The views, the walks, that boundless joy inspire!
Roll on, ye days of raptured influence, shine!
Nor, blind with ecstasy's celestial fire,
Shall Love behold the spark of earth-born time expire.

Three little moons, how short! amidst the grove
And pastoral savannas they consume!
While she, beside her buskined youth to rove,
Delights, in fancifully wild costume,
Her lovely brow to shade with Indian plume;
And forth in hunter-seeming vest they fare;

But not to chase the deer in forest gloom,
'Tis but the breath of heaven—the blessed air—
And interchange of hearts unknown, unseen to share.

Now labyrinths, which but themselves can pierce,
Methinks, conduct them to some pleasant ground,
Where welcome hills shut out the universe,
And pines their lawny walk encompass round;
There, if a pause delicious converse found,
'Twas but when o'er each heart th' idea stole,
(Perchance awhile in joy's oblivion drowned)
That come what may, while life's glad pulses roll,
Indissolubly thus should soul be knit to soul.

NOURMAHAL.

FROM "THE LIGHT OF THE HAREM," BY THOMAS MOORE.

THERE'S a beauty, forever unchangingly bright,
Like the long sunny lapse of a summer's day's light,
Shining on, shining on, by no shadow made tender,
Till love falls asleep in its sameness of splendor.
This *was* not the beauty—oh! nothing like this,
That to young Nourmahal gave such magic of bliss,
But that loveliness, ever in motion, which plays
Like the light upon autumn's soft shadowy days,
Now here and now there, giving warmth as it flies
From the lips to the cheek, from the cheek to the eyes,
Now melting in mist and now breaking in gleams,
Like the glimpses a saint has of heaven in his dreams.
When pensive, it seemed as if that very grace,
That charm of all others, was born with her face;
And when angry—for even in the tranquillest climes

Light breezes will ruffle the flowers sometimes—
The short, passing anger but seemed to awaken
New beauty, like flowers that are sweetest when shaken.
If tenderness touched her, the dark of her eye
At once took a darker, a heavenlier dye,
From the depth of whose shadow, like holy revealings
From innermost shrines, came the light of her feelings!
Then her mirth—oh! 'twas sportive as ever took wing
From the heart with a burst like the wild-bird in spring—
Illumed by a wit that would fascinate sages,
Yet playful as Peris just loosed from their cages.
While her laugh, full of life, without any control
But the sweet one of gracefulness, rung from her soul;
And where it most sparkled no glance could discover,
In lip, cheek, or eyes, for she brightened all over—
Like any fair lake that the breeze is upon,
When it breaks into dimples, and laughs in the sun.

DONNA JULIA.

FROM "DON JUAN," BY LORD BYRON.

THE darkness of her Oriental eye
Accorded with her Moorish origin;
(Her blood was not all Spanish, by-the-by;
In Spain, you know, this is a sort of sin)
When proud Granada fell, and forced to fly,
Boabdil wept, of Donna Julia's kin
Some went to Africa, some staid in Spain,
Her great-great-grandmamma chose to remain.

Her eye (I'm very fond of handsome eyes)
Was large and dark, suppressing half its fire

Until she spoke, then through its soft disguise
  Flashed an expression more of pride than ire,
And love than either; and there would arise
  A something in them which was not desire,
But would have been, perhaps, but for the soul
Which struggled through and chastened down the whole.

Her glossy hair was clustered o'er a brow
  Bright with intelligence, and fair, and smooth;
Her eyebrow's shape was like the aërial bow,
  Her cheek all purple with the beam of youth,
Mounting, at times, to a transparent glow,
  As if her veins ran lightning; she, in sooth,
Possessed an air and grace by no means common:
Her stature tall—I hate a dumpy woman.

LEILA.

FROM "THE GIAOUR," BY LORD BYRON.

HER eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
  But gaze on that of the gazelle,
It will assist the fancy well:
As large, as languishingly dark,
But soul beamed forth in every spark
That darted from beneath the lid,
Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.*
Yea, *soul*, and should our Prophet say
That form was naught but breathing clay,

* The celebrated fabulous ruby of Sultan Giamschid, the embellisher of Istakhar; from its splendor, named Schebgerag, "The Torch of Night"; also "The Cup of the Sun," etc.

By Allah! I would answer nay;
Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood,*
Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
With Paradise within my view,
And all his houris beckoning through.
Oh! who young Leila's glance could read
And keep that portion of his creed,
Which saith that woman is but dust,
A soulless toy for tyrant's lust?
On her might muftis gaze, and own
That through her eye the Immortal shone;
On her fair cheek's unfading hue
The young pomegranate's blossoms strew
Their bloom in blushes ever new:
Her hair in hyacinthine flow,
When left to roll its folds below,
As midst her handmaids in the hall
She stood superior to them all,
Hath swept the marble where her feet
Gleamed whiter than the mountain sleet,
Ere from the cloud that gave it birth
It fell, and caught one stain of earth.
The cygnet nobly walks the water:
So moved on earth Circassia's daughter,
The loveliest bird of Franguestan!
As rears her crest the ruffled swan,
And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
When pass the steps of stranger man
Along the banks that bound her tide;
Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck—

* Al-Sirat, the bridge of breadth less than the thread of a famished spider, over which the Mussulmans must *skate* into Paradise, to which it is the only entrance.

Thus armed with beauty would she check
Intrusion's glance, till Folly's gaze
Shrunk from the charms it meant to praise.

ZULEIKA.

FROM "THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS," BY LORD BYRON.

FAIR, as the first that fell of womankind,
When on that dread yet lovely serpent smiling,
Whose image then was stamped upon her mind—
But once beguiled—and evermore beguiling;
Dazzling, as that, oh! too transcendent vision
To sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber given,
When heart meets heart again in dreams Elysian,
And paints the lost on earth revived in heaven;
Soft, as the memory of buried love;
Pure, as the prayer which childhood wafts above;
Was she—the daughter of that rude old chief,
Who met the maid with tears—but not of grief.

Who hath not proved how feebly words essay
To fix one spark of beauty's heavenly ray?
Who doth not feel, until his failing sight
Faints into dimness with its own delight,
His changing cheek, his sinking heart confess
The might—the majesty of loveliness?
Such was Zuleika—such around her shone
The nameless charms unmarked by her alone;
The light of love, the purity of grace,
The mind, the music breathing from her face,
The heart whose softness harmonized the whole—
And, oh! that eye was in itself a soul!

HAIDÉE.

FROM "DON JUAN," BY LORD BYRON.

HER brow was overhung with coins of gold,
That sparkled o'er the auburn of her hair,
Her clustering hair, whose longer locks were rolled
In braids behind; and though her stature were
Even of the highest for a female mold,
They nearly reached her heel; and in her air
There was a something which bespoke command,
As one who was a lady in the land.

Her hair, I said, was auburn; but her eyes
Were black as death, their lashes the same hue,
Of downcast length, in whose silk shadow lies
Deepest attraction; for when to the view
Forth from its raven fringe the full glance flies,
Ne'er with such force the swiftest arrow flew;
'Tis as the snake late coiled, who pours his length,
And hurls at once his venom and his strength.

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's pure dye
Like twilight rosy still with the set sun;
Short upper lip—sweet lips! that make us sigh
Ever to have seen such; for she was one
Fit for the model of a statuary,
(A race of mere impostors, when all's done—
I've seen much finer women, ripe and real,
Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal.)

And such was she, the lady of the cave:
Her dress was very different from the Spanish,
Simpler, and yet of colors not so grave;

For, as you know, the Spanish women banish
Bright hues when out-of-doors, and yet, while wave
Around them (what I hope will never vanish)
The basquina and the mantilla, they
Seem at the same time mystical and gay.

But with our damsel this was not the case:
Her dress was many-colored, finely spun;
Her locks curled negligently round her face,
But through them gold and gems profusely shone;
Her girdle sparkled, and the richest lace
Flowed in her veil, and many a precious stone
Flashed on her little hand; but, what was shocking,
Her small snow feet had slippers, but no stocking.

* * * * * * * *

Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
The very air seemed lighter from her eyes
That were so soft and beautiful, and rife
With all we can imagine of the skies,
And pure as Psyche ere she grew a wife—
Too pure even for the purest human ties;
Her overpowering presence made you feel
It would not be idolatry to kneel.

MADELINE.

FROM "THE EVE OF ST. AGNES," BY JOHN KEATS.

THEY told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;

As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a god in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retired; not cooled by high disdain.
But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere:
She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

She danced along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
The hallowed hour was near at hand: she sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwinked with fairy fancy; all amort,
Save to St. Agnes, and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

* * * * * * *

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She closed the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;

As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

A casement high and triple-arched there was,
All garlanded with carven imageries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep damasked wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and boon:
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seemed a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint;
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathèd pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile, she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppressed
Her soothèd limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully havened both from joy and pain;
Clasped like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut and be a bud again.

EVANGELINE.

FROM "EVANGELINE," BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

SOMEWHAT apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of Minas,
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres, and with him, directing his household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.
Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;
White as the snow were his locks, and cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers;
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the way-side,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows,
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale. Ah! fair in sooth was the maiden,

Fairer was she when on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop
Sprinkles the congregation and scatters blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,
Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.
But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.

* * * * * * * * * *

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of Grand Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his household.
Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her, as the saint of his deepest devotion;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her garment!
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,
And as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of iron;
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all men;
For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,

Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters
Out of the self-same book, with the hymns of the church and the plain-song;
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him
Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,
Nailing the shoe in its place, while near him the tire of the cart-wheel
Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering darkness
Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny and crevice,
Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring bellows,
And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the ashes,
Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the chapel.
Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
Down the hill-side bounding, they glided away o'er the meadow.
Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the rafters,
Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the swallow
Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its fledglings;
Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the swallow!
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action.
She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.
"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called; for that was the sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with apples;
She, too, would bring to her husband's house delight and abundance,
Filling it full of love, and the ruddy faces of children.

ENID AND ELAINE.

FROM "IDYLS OF THE KING," BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

(*There are no creations in imaginative literature outside of Shakespeare more full of the grace and charm of lovely womanhood than Tennyson's "Enid and Elaine," but here we encounter the difficulty that pertains to so many dramatic stories, and which was pointed out at the beginning of this Evening. The very perfection of the poet's art defeats our present purpose, his characters being revealed to us by action rather than by description. When we look for their portraits we have to content ourselves with a few touches here and there—skillful touches, it is true, but always more of suggestion than of distinct portraiture. These two women, however, are so truly noble and lovely, they belong so essentially to the gallery we have been forming, that we have been unwilling to omit them, meager as the quotations must be. The passages that follow will at least serve to recall them to our imagination.*)

ENID.

THE brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court,
A tributary prince of Devon, one
Of that great order of the Table Round,
Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,
And loved her, as he loved the light of heaven.
And as the light of heaven varies, now
At sunrise, now at sunset, now by night
With moon and trembling stars, so loved Geraint
To make her beauty vary day by day,
In crimsons and in purples and in gems.
And Enid, but to please her husband's eye,
Who first had found and loved her in a state

Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him
In some fresh splendor; and the Queen herself,
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service done,
Loved her, and often with her own white hands
Arrayed and decked her, as the loveliest,
Next after her own self, in all the court.

(*Very charming is the picture when Geraint first beheld Enid in her home, "once rich, now poor":*)

Entering there
Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen stones,
The dusty-raftered, many-cobwebbed hall,
He found an ancient dame in dim brocade;
And near her, like a blossom vermeil-white,
That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath,
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,
Her daughter. In a moment thought Geraint,
"Here by God's rood is the one maid for me."

(*And equally charming the description of Enid serving him:*)

And Enid brought sweet cakes to make them cheer,
And in her veil infolded, manchet bread.
And then, because their hall must also serve
For kitchen, boiled the flesh, and spread the board,
And stood behind, and waited on the three.
And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
Geraint had longing in him evermore
To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
That crost the trencher as she laid it down:
But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
For now the wine made summer in his veins,
Let his eye rove in following, or rest

On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,
Now here, now there, about the dusky hall.

(*The poem is a succession of these pictures, and in the end we come to know and love Enid the Fair, as her ladies loved to call her, and Enid the Good, as a grateful people named her.*)

ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the lovable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to the east
Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;
Which first she placed where morning's earliest ray
Might strike it, and awake her with the gleam;
Then fearing rust or soilure, fashioned for it
A case of silk, and braided thereupon
All the devices blazoned on the shield
In their own tinct, and added, of her wit,
A border fantasy of branch and flower,
And yellow-throated nestling in the nest.
Nor rested thus content, but day by day
Leaving her household and good father climbed
That eastern tower, and entering barred her door,
Stript off the case, and read the naked shield,
Now guessed a hidden meaning in his arms,
Now made a pretty history to herself
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
And every scratch a lance had made upon it,
Conjecturing when and where: this cut is fresh;
That ten years back; this dealt him at Caerlyle;
That at Caerleon; this at Camelot:
And ah God's mercy what a stroke was there!
And here a thrust that might have killed, but God

Broke the strong lance, and rolled his enemy down,
And saved him: so she lived in fantasy.

(*"So she lived in fantasy"; and her story is the story of "that love which was her doom."*)

Where could be found face daintier? Then her shape
From forehead down to foot perfect—again
From foot to forehead exquisitely turned.

* * * * * * * *

Fair she was, my King,
Pure, as you ever wish your knights to be.
To doubt her fairness were to want an eye,
To doubt her pureness were to want a heart.

(*These lines reveal to us the beauty, and delicacy, and sweet devotion of the "lily maid"; and that is all. The rest lives in her story.*)

L'ENVOI.

"I HAVE finished my task," said Herbert, closing his books. "I hope the material presented to you has seemed worthy of the theme."

"Was ever woman so honored before!" exclaimed Sylvia, looking to her companions for their sanction of this sentiment. "What kindly, what appreciative, what noble word have the poets not spoken! Unhappily, how impossible it is for women to live up to the ideal they have imagined!"

"I am debarred as one of the masculine sex," said Mr. Bluff, "from a full share in the glory of these eight delightful Evenings; but, as one of the English-speaking race, I have found a great deal in them to gratify my pride. How brilliantly English literature on this theme shows beside all others—as, indeed, it does on almost all themes! The range and the variety; the large and spacious dignity on one hand, and the graceful lightness, delicacy, and fancy on the other; the tenderness and sweetness; the charm of happy invention, and the splendor of glorious creations—everything, indeed, that each other literature claims as its own unites in ours. By English literature you of course understand me to mean the literature of the English tongue."

"Yet," said Herbert, "when we think of Dante's Beatrice and Petrarch's Laura, we may feel that nothing in English literature equals the splendid apostrophes addressed to these women. No doubt, however, the compass of all that with us has been inspired by admiration for women is broader than the Italian, and perhaps richer

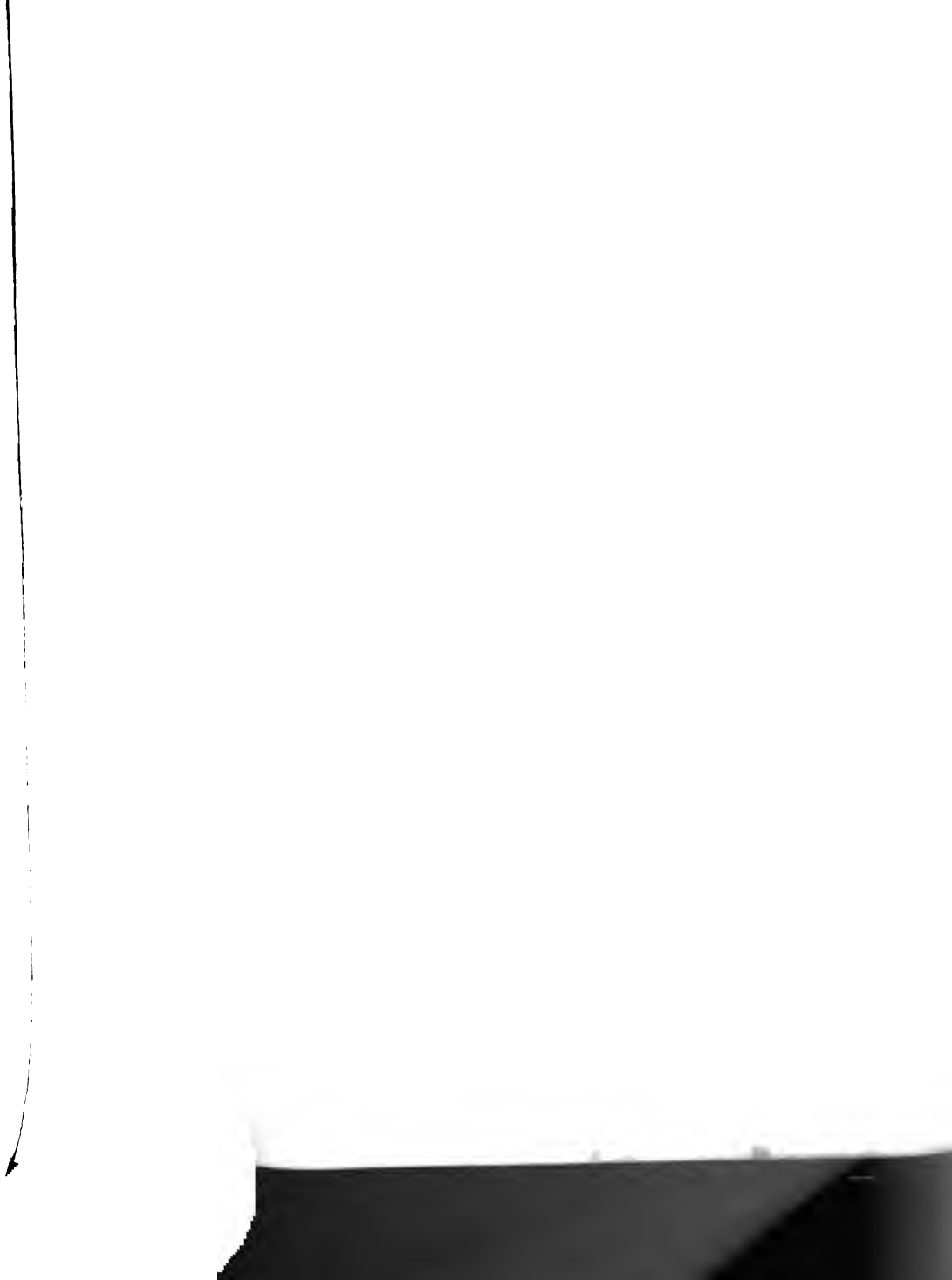
in variety of thought. It is certain, I think, that our literature has produced the most perfect ideals; for assuredly the women of Shakespeare and of Tennyson, to say nothing of the heroines of other poets, are unmatched. But it must be remembered that one Evening only being devoted to foreign poets, I could necessarily but glance at ground so extended—merely, as it were, gather a daisy from one field, a violet from another, a rose or two from the abundant roses of well-known gardens."

"Yet the selections are so varied," said Mr. Bluff, "and include so many names, they may be considered in a measure fairly representative."

"Not quite that," replied Herbert. "It is true that some effort was made to represent different periods, and to include as many illustrious names as the primary purpose—which was to select poems that do honor to women—would permit. If a few great names are not found in the list, it must be attributed to their lack of gallantry, or to some other good cause. Unfortunately, it often happens with poets of the past, and poets of the present in other tongues, that purity is not always a cardinal consideration. Charming passages are often inextricably interwoven with that which is unquotable; and not unfrequently a poem that begins in the clouds ends in the gutter. But the collection is not broadly representative, if only because the names of no female poets are to be found in the long list of poets from whom selections have been made."

"But," interrupted Mr. Bluff, "our Evenings were to illustrate, by the voice of the poets, *man's* admiration for woman, and of course the writings only of the masculine portion of the poetic fraternity came within our plan."

"It is necessary, however, to bear this in mind," said Herbert; "for, otherwise, the omission of female poets might seem a failure to recognize the literary attainments of women, which, in a col-



PAGE

TASSO, TORQUATO (1544–1595).
To Leonora 167
Translation of J. H. Wiffin.

TAYLOR, SIR HENRY (1800– ——).
Character of a Wife. ("Philip Van Artevelde.") 252

TENNYSON, ALFRED (1810– ——).
Woman's Cause the Man's. ("The Princess.") 19
Lilian 81
Isabel 82
Madeline 84
Adeline 85
Margaret 88
Eleanore 90
The Miller's Daughter. ("The Miller's Daughter.") 95
The Gardener's Daughter. ("The Gardener's Daughter.") 96
Maud. ("Maud.") 102
Rosalind 106
A Dream of Fair Women 108
Early Impressions. ("The Princess.") 258
Look through mine Eyes with thine. ("The Miller's Daughter.") 259
Enid and Elaine. ("Idyls of the King.") 305

THEOCRITUS (3d century B. C.)
Helen's Epithalamion 156
Translation of Sir Edward Dyer.

THOMSON, JAMES (1700–1748).
Right Pursuits of Women. ("The Seasons.") 30

TIBULLUS (55–18 B. C.).
Sulpicia 160
Translation of Dr. Grainger.

VICENTE, GIL (1482–1557).
How fair the Maiden! 196
Translation of E. A. Bowring.

WALLER, EDMUND (1605–1687).
On a Girdle 76
To Amoret 77

WALLER, JOHN FRANCIS (1810– ——).
Kitty Neil 146

WHITTIER, JOHN GREENLEAF (1807– ——).
Maiden Life. ("Snow-Bound.") 257

WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM (1770–1850).
To a Highland Girl 207
A Portrait 247

WOTTON, SIR HENRY (1568–1639).
To his Mistress 66